

VOYAGE

W. Moody & N. Miller

St. KILDA,

The remotest of all the

HEBRIDES,

OR,

Western Isles of SCOTLAND.

GIVING

An Account of the very remarkable Inhabitants of that place; their Beauty and singular Chastity; (Fornication and Adultery being unknown among them) their Genius for Poetry, Music, Dancing; their surprising Dexterity in climbing the Rocks and Walls of Houses; Diversions, Habit, Food, Language, Diseases and Methods of Cure; their extensive Charity; their Contempt of Gold and Silver as below the Dignity of human Nature; their religious Ceremonies, Notion of Spirits and Visions, &c.

To which is added,

An Account of *Roderick*, the late Impostor there, pretending to be sent by St. *John Baptist*, with new Revelations and Discoveries; his Diabolical Inventions, Attempts upon the WOMEN, &c.

By M. MARTIN, Gent.

The Inhabitants of St. Kilda are almost the only People in the World who feel the Sweetness of true Liberty; what the Condition of the People in the Golden Age is imagined by the Poets to be, that theirs really is. Page 67.

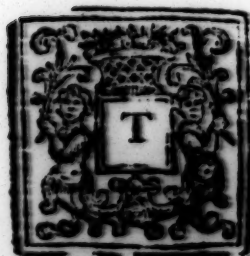
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A
V O Y A G E
T O
St. *K I L D A*, &c.



TH E various Relations concerning St. *Kilda*, given by those of the *Western* Isles, and Continent, induc'd me to a narrow Enquiry about it: For this End I applied my self to the present Steward, who by his Description, and the Products of the Island, which were brought to me, together with a Natural Impulse of Curiosity, form'd such an Idea of it in my Mind, that I determin'd to satisfy my self with the first Occasion I had of going thither; it being never hitherto described to any purpose; the Accounts which are given by *Buchanan* and Sir *Robert Murray* being but Relations from second and third Hands,
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neither of them ever having the Opportunity of being upon the Place ; which I attempted several Times to visit, but in vain ; until last Summer, the Laird of *Mac-Leod* heartily recommending the Care of the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* to Mr. *John Campbell*, Minister of *Harries*, who accordingly went to *St. Kilda*. This Occasion I chearfully embrac'd ; and accordingly we embark'd at the *Isle Esjay* in *Harries* the 29th of *May*, at Six in the Afternoon, 1697. The Wind at *S. E.*

We set sail with a gentle Breeze of Wind, bearing to the *Westward*, and were not well got out of the Harbour, when Mr. *Campbell* observing the Whiteness of the Waves attended with an extraordinary Noise beating upon the Rocks, express'd his Dislike of it, as in those Parts a never-failing Prognostick of an ensuing Storm ; but the same appearing sometimes in Summer, before excessive Heat, this was slighted by the Crew. But as we advanced about two Leagues further, upon the Coast of the *Isle Pabbay*, the former Signs appearing more conspicuously, we were forced unanimously to conclude a Storm was approaching, which occasion'd a Motion for our Return ; but the Wind and Ebb-Tide concurring, determin'd us to pursue our Voyage, in hopes to arrive at our desired Harbour, before the Wind or Storm should rise, which we judg'd would not be suddenly : But our fond Imagination was not seconded with a good Event, as appears by the Sequel ; for we had scarce sail'd a League further, when the Wind inclin'd more *Southerly*, and alter'd
our

our Measures; we endeavour'd by the help of our Oars to reach the *Haw-sker Rocks*, some Four Leagues to the *South-Coast*, which we were not able to effect, tho' we consum'd the Night in this vain Expectation. By this Time we were so far advanc'd in the Ocean, that after a second Motion for our Return, it was not found practicable, especially since we could not promise to fetch any Point of *Scotland*; this obliged us to make the best of our Way for *St. Kilda*, though labouring under the Disadvantages of Wind and Tide almost contrary to us. Our Crew became extremely fatigu'd and discouraged without sight of Land for Sixteen Hours; at length one of our Number discover'd several Tribes of the Fowls of *St. Kilda* flying, holding their Course *Southerly* of us, which (to some of our Crew) was a Demonstration we had lost our Course, by the Violence of the Flood and Wind, both concurring to carry us *Northerly*, though we steer'd by our Compass right *West*.

The Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* take their Measures from the Flight of those Fowls, when the Heavens are not clear, as from a sure Compass, Experience shewing that every Tribe of Fowls bends their Course to their respective Quarters, though out of sight of the Isle; this appeared clearly in our gradual Advances; and their Motion being compar'd, did exactly quadrate with our Compass. The Inhabitants rely so much upon this Observation, that they prefer it to the surest Compass; but we begg'd their Pardon to differ from them, though at the same Time we could not deny but their Rule was as certain as

our Compass. While we were in this state, one of our Number espied the Isle of *Borera*, near three Leagues *North* of *St. Kilda*, which was then about four Leagues to the *South* of us; this was a joyful sight, and begot new Vigour in our Men, who being refresh'd with Victuals, low'ring Mast and Sail, rowed to a Miracle: While they were tugging at the Oars, we plied them with Plenty of *Aqua Vitæ* to support them, whose borrow'd Spirits did so far waste their own, that upon our Arrival at *Borera*, there were scarce one of our Crew able to manage Cable or Anchor: We arrived there, and put in under the Hollow of an extraordinary high Rock, to the *North* of this Isle, which was all covered with a prodigious Number of *Solan* Geese hatching in their Nests; the Heavens were darkned by those flying above our Heads; their Excrements were in such Quantity, that they gave a Tincture to the Sea, and at the same Time sullied our Boat and Cloaths: Two of them confirmed the Truth of what has been frequently reported of their stealing from one another Grass wherewith to make their Nests, by affording us the following and very agreeable Diversion, and 'twas thus; One of them finding his Neighbour's Nest without the Fowl, lays hold upon the Opportunity, and steals of it as much Grass as he could conveniently carry, taking his flight towards the Ocean; from thence he returns after a short Turn, as if he had made a foreign Purchase, but it does not pass for such, as Fate would have it; for the Owner discovered the Fact, before this

Thief

Theif got out of fight, and being too nimble for his cunning, waits his Return, all arm'd with Fury, engages him desperately ; this bloody Battle was fought above our Heads, and proved fatal to the Thief, who fell dead so near our Boat, that our Men took him up, and presently dress'd and eat him ; which they reckoned as an Omen and Prognostick of good Success in this Voyage.

We propos'd to be at St. *Kilda* next Day, but our Expectation was frustrated by a violent Storm, which did almost drive us to the Ocean ; where we had incurred no small Risque, being no ways fitted for it ; our Men laid aside all Hopes of Life, being possess'd with the Belief that all this Misfortune proceeded from the Impostor (of whom hereafter) who they believed had employed the Devil to raise this extraordinary Storm against Mr. *Campbell*, Minister, who was to counteract him. All our Arguments, whether from Natural Reason, or the Providence of God, were not of Force enough to persuade them to the contrary, until it pleas'd God to command a Calm the Day following, which was the First of *June*, and then we rowed to St. *Kilda* ; as we came close upon the Rocks, some of the Inhabitants, who were then employed in setting their Gins, welcomed us with a *God save you*, their usual Salutation, admiring to see us get thither contrary to Wind and Tide ; they were walking unconcernedly on the Side of this prodigious high Rock, at the same Time keeping Pace with our Boat, to my great Admiration, insomuch that I was quickly obliged

obliged to turn away my Eyes, lest I should have had the unpleasant Spectacle of some of them tumbling down into the Sea; but they themselves had no such Fears, for they out run our Boat to the Town, from thence they brought the Steward and all the Inhabitants of both Sexes to receive us; we approached the utmost Part of the Rock, called the *Saddle*; a Parcel of the Inhabitants were mounted upon it, having on their Feet the usual Dress on such Occasions, *i. e.* Socks of old Rags sowed with Feathers instead of Thread; our Boat being come pretty near, it was kept off this Rock with long Poles; some of their Number coming by Pairs into the Sea received Mr. *Campbell* and me upon their Shoulders, and carried us to Land, we were received with all the Demonstrations of Joy and Kindness they were able to express; the Impostor endeavouring to outdo his Neighbours, and placing himself always in the Front of our Attendants, discovered his Hypocrisy, of which an Account shall be given in the Conclusion. All of us walking together to the little Village where there was a Lodging prepared for us, furnished with Beds of Straw, and according to the ancient Custom of the Place, the Officer, who presides over them (in the Steward's Absence) summoned the Inhabitants, who by consent agreed upon a daily Maintenance for us, as, Bread, Butter, Cheese, Mutton, Fowls, Eggs, also Fire, &c. all which was to be given in at our Lodging twice every Day; this was done in the most regular Manner, each Family by turns paying their Quota proportionably

portionably to their Lands. I remember the Allowance for each Man *per diem*, beside a Barley Cake, was Eighteen of the Eggs laid by the Fowl called by them *Lavy*, and a greater Number of the lesser Eggs, as they differed in Proportion; the largest of the Eggs is near in bigness to that of a Goose, the rest of the Eggs gradually of a lesser Size.

We had the Curiosity after three Weeks Residence, to make a Calcule of the Number of Eggs bestowed upon those of our Boat, and the *Stewart's Birlin*, or *Galley*, the whole amounted to sixteen thousand Eggs; and without all doubt the Inhabitants, who were treble our Number, consumed many more Eggs and Fowls than we could. From this it is easy to imagine, that a vast Number of Fowls must resort here all Summer, which is yet the more probable if it be considered, that every Fowl lays but one Egg at a Time, if allowed to hatch.

The Inhabitants live together in a little Village, which carries all the Signs of an extream Poverty; the Houses are of a low Form, having all the Doors to the *North-East*, both on purpose to secure them from the Shocks of the Tempest of the *South-West* Winds. The Walls of their Houses are rudely built of Stone, the short Couples joining at the Ends of the Roof, upon whose Sides small Ribs of Wood are laid, these being cover'd with Straw; the whole secured by Ropes made of twisted Heath, the extremity of which on each Side is poised with Stone to preserve the Thatch from being blown away by the Wind. This little Village is seated

ed in a Valley furrounded with four Mountains, which serve as so many Ramparts of Defence, and are Amphi-theatres, from whence a fair Prospect of the Ocean and Isles is to be seen in a fair Day.

This Isle is by the Inhabitants called *Hirt*, and likewise by all the Western Islanders; *Buchanan* calls it *Hirta*; Sir *John Narbrough*, and all Seamen, call it *St. Kilda*; and in Sea Maps *St. Kilder*, particularly in a *Dutch* Sea Map from *Ireland* to *Zealand*, published at *Amsterdam* by *Peter Goas* in the Year 1663, wherein the Isle of *St. Kilda* is placed due *West* betwixt fifty and sixty Miles from the Middle of the *Lewis*, and the Isle answers directly to the fifty-eighth Degree of *Northern* Latitude, as marked upon the Ends of the Map, and from it lies *Rokol*, a small Rock sixty Leagues to the *Westward* of *St. Kilda*; the Inhabitants of this Place call it *Rokabarra*; this Map contains the Soundings of some Places near *St. Kilda*; these not exceeding twenty or thirty Fathom, it contains only the larger Isle, and a Part of the Lesser Isles; this Island is also called *St. Kilda*, by a Company of *French* and *Spaniards*; who lost their Ship at *Rokol* in the Year 1686, which they nam'd to the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda*, whose Latitude is fifty-seven Degrees and three Minutes.

The Air here is sharp and wholesome; the Hills are often covered with ambient white Mists, which in Winter are Fore-runners of Snow, if they continue on the Tops of the Hills; and in Summer, if only on the Tops of
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the Hills, they prognosticate Rain ; and when they descend to the Valleys, it is a Prognostick of excessive Heat. The Night here about the time of the Summer Solstice exceeds not an Hour in length, especially if the Season is fair, then the Sun disappears but for a short Space, the Reflex from the Sea being all the Time visible ; the Harvest and Winter are liable to great Winds and Rain, the *South-West* Wind annoying them more than any other ; it is commonly observed to blow from the *West* for the most part of, if not all *July*.

St. Kilda is Two Miles long from *East* to *West* ; from *South* to *North* One Mile in breadth ; Five Miles in Circumference, and is naturally fenc'd with one continued Face of a Rock of great height, except a part of the Bay, which lies to the *South-East*, and is generally well fenced with a raging Sea : This Bay is one Half Mile in length, and another in breadth ; it is not ordinary for any Vessels to Anchor within this Bay, in case of a Storm, for this might endanger them ; therefore they drop Anchor without at the Entry, judging it the safest Place : The only Place for landing here, is on the *North* side of this Bay, upon a Rock with a little Declination, which is slippery, being cloathed with several Sorts of Sea-Weeds ; these, together with a raging Sea, render the Place more inaccessible, it being seldom without a raging Sea, except under favour of a Neap Tide, a *North-East* or *West* Wind, or with a perfect Calm ; when these Circumstances concur, the *Birlin* or Boat is brought to the Side of the

Rock, upon which all the Inhabitants of both Sexes are ready to join their united Force to hale her through this Rock, having for this end a Rope fastned to the Fore-part; a competent Number of them are also employed on each Side; both these are determined by a Cryer, who is employed on purpose to warn them all at the same Minute, and he ceases when he finds in convenient to give them a breathing.

At the Head of the Bay there's a plain Sand, which is only to be seen in Summer, the Winter-Sea washing it all off the Stones; there is no landing upon this Place with safety, which the *Steward* has learn'd to his Cost. There is a little Bay on the *West* Side of this Isle, all fac'd with an Iron-colour'd Rock; some Vessels take shelter here, when the Wind is at *South* or *North-East*; there is a place of the Rock here on the *South-Side* the Rivulet, where you may land, if a Neap-Tide or Calm offer. The Sea is very impetuous every where about this Isle; they shewed me big Stones which were lately removed out of their place, and cast into the Gallies Dock; I measured some of them which were in length seven, others eight Foot, and three or four broad.

There is a little old ruinous Fort on the *South* Part of the *South-East* Bay, called, the *Dowry*. It is evident from what hath been already said, that this Place may be reckon'd among the strongest Forts (whether natural or artificial) in the World; Nature has provided the Place with Store of Ammunition for acting on the Defensive; that is, a Heap of loose
Stones

Stones in the Top of the Hill *Oterveaul*, directly above the landing-Place; it is very easy to discharge Volleys of this Ammunition directly upon the Place of Landing, and that from a great Height almost Perpendicular; this I myself had Occasion to demonstrate, having for my Diversion put it in Practice, to the great Satisfaction of the Inhabitants, to whom this Defence never occur'd hitherto. They are resolved to make Use of this for the future, to keep off the Lowlanders, against whom of late they have conceived Prejudices. A few Hands may be capable of resisting some hundreds, if the above-mention'd Weapons be but made use of. Those four Mountains are fac'd on that Side which regards the Sea, with Rocks of extraordinary Height; the Hill *Conagir* on the *North* Side, is about two hundred Fathoms height, perpendicularly above the Sea.

There are round this Isle four *Arches* or *Vaults* through which the Sea passes, as doth the Day-Light from either Side, which is visible to any, though at a good Distance; some of them representing a large Gate: Two of these look to the *South*, and two *North-West*; that on the Point of the *West* Bay is six Fathom high above Water, four in Breadth, fifty Paces in Length; the Top two Fathom thick, and very strong, the Cattle feeding upon it.

There are several Veins of different Stone to be seen in the Rocks of the *South-East* Bay; upon the *North* Side of this Rock is one as it were cut out by Nature, resembling a *Tarras-Walk*. The Chrystal grows under the Rock

at the landing-Place; this Rock must be pierc'd a Foot or two deep, before the Chrystal can be had from the Bed of Sand where it lies; the Water at the Bottom is of a black Colour; the largest Piece is not above four Inches long, and about two in Diameter, each Piece Sexangular.

Upon the *West* Side of this Isle, there is a Valley with a Declination towards the Sea, having a Rivulet running through the Middle of it, on each Side of which is an Ascent of half a Mile; all which Piece of Ground is call'd by the Inhabitants, the female Warrior's *Glen*: This *Amazon* is famous in their Traditions; her House or Dairy of Stone is yet extant, some of the Inhabitants dwell in it all Summer, though it be some hundred Years old; the whole is built of Stone, without any Wood, Lime, Earth or Mortar to cement it, and is built in Form of a Circle, Pyramid-wise towards the Top, having a Vent in it, the Fire being always in the Centre of the Floor; the Stones are long and thin, which supplies the Defect of Wood: The Body of this House contains not above nine Persons sitting; there are three Beds or low Vaults that go off the Side of the Wall, a Pillar betwixt each Bed, which contains five Men apiece; at the Entry to one of these low Vaults is a Stone standing upon one End fix'd, upon this they say she ordinarily laid her Helmet; there are two Stones on the other Side, upon which she is reported to have laid her Sword: She is said to have been much addicted to Hunting, and that in her Time all the

the Space betwixt this Isle and that of *Harries*, was one continued Tract of dry Land. There was some Years ago a Pair of large Deers-Horns found in the Top of *Oterveaul* Hill, almost a Foot under Ground; and there was likewise a wooden Dish full of Deer's Grease found in the same Hill under Ground. 'Tis also said of this Warrior, that she let loose her Grey-hounds after the Deer in *St. Kilda*, making their Course towards the opposite Isles. There are several Traditions of this famous *Amazon*, with which I will not further trouble the Reader.

In this Isle there are Plenty of excellent Fountains or Springs; that near the female Warrior's House is reputed to be the best, the Name of it *Toubir-nim buey*, importing no less than the Well of Qualities and Virtues; it runneth from *East* to *West*, being sixty Paces ascent above the Sea: I drank of it twice, an *English* Quart at each Time; it is very clear, exceeding cold, light, and diuretick; I was not able to hold my Hands in it above a few Minutes, in Regard of its Coldness; the Inhabitants of *Harries* find it effectual against windy-Cholicks, Gravel, Head-aches, this Well hath a Cover of Stone.

There is a very large Well near the Town, call'd *St. Kilder's* Well, from which the Island is suppos'd to derive its Name; this Water is not inferior to that above-mentioned, it runneth to the *South-East* from the *North-West*.

There is another Well within half a Mile of this, named after one *Conirdan*, an hundred Paces above

above the Sea, and runneth from *North-Well* towards the *South-East*, having a stone Cover.

Within twelve Paces of this is a little and excellent Fountain, which those of *Harries* and *St. Kilda*, will needs call by the Author's Name, and were then resolved to give it a Cover of Stone, such as is above described.

There is a celebrated Well issuing out of the Face of a Rock on the *North* Side of the *East* Bay, called by the Inhabitants and others, *the Well of Youth*, but is only accessible by the Inhabitants, no Stranger daring to climb the steep Rock; the Water of it is received, as it falls, into the Sea; it runs towards the *South-East*. The Taste of the Water of those Wells was so pleasant, that for several Weeks after, the best Fountains in the adjacent Isles did not relish with me. There is a Rivulet runneth close by the Town, and another larger beyond *Kilder's* Well; this last serves for washing Linnen, which it doth as well without Soap, as other Water does with it; of this we had Experience, which was a Confirmation of what had been reported to us concerning this Water: We search'd if in the Brinks if we could discover any Fuller's-Earth, but found none; we discover'd some Pieces of Iron-Ore in several Places of it; this Rivulet drops from the mossy Ground in the Top of the Hills.

The whole Island is one hard Rock, form'd into four high Mountains, three of which are in the Middle, all thinly cover'd with black or brown Earth, not above a Foot, some Places half a Foot deep, except the Top of the Hills, where

where it is above three Feet deep, and affords them good Turf; the Grafs is very short but kindly, producing Plenty of Milk; the Number of Sheep commonly maintain'd in St. *Kilda*, and the two adjacent Isles, does not exceed two Thousand, and generally they are speckled, some Whitish, some Philamort, and are of an ordinary Size; they do not resemble Goats in any Thing, as *Buchanan* was informed, except in their Horns, which are extraordinary large, particularly those in the lesser Isles.

The Number of the Horses exceeds not eighteen, all of a red Colour, very low, and smooth Skinn'd, being only employ'd in carrying their Turf and Corn, and at the Anniversary Cavalcade, of which hereafter. The Cows that are about ninety Head, small and great, all of them having their Foreheads White and Black, which is discernable at a great Distance, are of a low Stature, but fat and sweet Beef; the Dogs, Cats, and all the Sea-Fowls of this Isle are speckled.

The Soil is very grateful to the Labourer, producing ordinarily sixteen, eighteen, or twenty Fold sometimes; their Grain is only *Bear*, and some Oats; the Barley is the largest produced in all the *Western* Isles; they use no Plough but a kind of crooked Spade; their Harrows are of Wood, as are the Teeth in the Front also, and all the Rest supplied only with long Tangles of Sea-Ware tied to the Harrow by the small Ends; the Roots hanging loose behind, scatter the Clods broken by the Wooden Teeth; this they are forced to use for Want
of

of Wood. Their arable Land is very nicely parted into ten Divisions, and these into Subdivisions, each Division distinguished by the Name of some deceased Man or Woman, who were Natives of the Place; there is one Spot called *Multa Terra*, another *Multus Agris*. The chief Ingredient in their Composts is Ashes of Turf mix'd with Straw; with these they mix their Urine, which by Experience they find to have much of the vegetable Nitre; they do not preserve it in Quantities as elsewhere, but convey it immediately from the Fountain to the Ashes, which by daily Practice they find most advantageous; they join also the Bones, Wings, and Entrails of their Sea-Fowls to their Straw; they sow very thick, and have a proportionable growth; they pluck all their *Bear* by the Roots in Handfuls, both for the Sake of their Houses, which they thatch with it, and their Cows which they take in during the Winter; the Corn produced by this Compost is perfectly free of any Kind of Weeds; it produces much Sorrel where the Compost reaches.

The Coast of *St. Kilda*, and the lesser Isles are plentifully furnished with Variety of Fish, as Cod, Ling, Mackarell, Congars, Braziers, Turbat, Graylards, Sythes; these last two are the same Kind, only differing in Bigness, some call them black Mouths; they are large as any Salmon, and somewhat longer; there are also Laiths, Pudloes, Herring, and many more; most of these are fished by the Inhabitants upon the Rock, for they have neither Nets nor long Lines. Their common Bait is the *Lympets*
or

or *Patellæ*, being par-boil'd; they use likewise the Fowl called by them Bowger, its Flesh raw; which the Fish near the lesser Isles catch greedily sometimes they use the Bowger's Flesh, and the Lympets *Patellæ* at the same Time upon one Hook, and this proves successful also. In the Month of *July* a considerable Quantity of Mackarell run themselves ashore, but always with a Spring Tide. The *Amphibia* seen here, are the Otters and Seals; this latter the Inhabitants reckon very good Meat; there is no Sort of Trees, no, not the least Shrub grows here, nor ever a Bee seen at any Time.

Levinis, a Rock about fourteen Paces high, and thirty in Circumference, narrow at the Top; it stands about half a League to the *South-East* Bay, and is not covered with any kind of Earth or Grass; it hath a Spring of Fresh Water issuing out at the Side; this Rock, by an antient Custom, belongs to the Galley's Crew, but the above-mentioned Allowance disposes them to undervalue it. Betwixt the *West* Point of *St. Kilda*, and the *Isle Soa*, is the famous Rock *Stackdonn*, i. e. as much, in their Language, as a *Mischievous Rock*, for it hath prov'd so to some of their Number, who perished in attempting to climb it; it is much of the Form and Height of a Steeple; there is a very great Dexterity, and it is reckoned no small gallantry to climb this Rock, especially that Part of it called the *Thumb*, which is so little, that of all the Parts of a Man's Body, the Thumb only can lay hold on it, and that must be only for the Space of one Minute; during which Time his Feet have no Support, nor any Part of his Body touch the Stone, except the Thumb, at
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which Minute he must jump by the help of his Thumb, and the Agility of his Body concurring to raise him higher at the same Time, to a sharp Point of the Rock, which when he has got hold of, puts him above Danger, and having a Rope about his Middle, that he casts down to the Boat, by the help of which he carries up as many Persons as are designed for Fowling at this Time; the Foreman, or principal Climber has the Reward of four Fowls bestowed upon him above his Proportion; and, perhaps, one might think four thousand too little to compensate so great a Danger as this Man incurs; he has this Advantage by it, that he is recorded among their greatest Heroes; as are all the Foremen who lead the Van in getting up this *Mischievous Rock*.

Within Pistol shot from this Place is the Isle *Soa*, a Mile and an half in Circumference, but contracted narrower toward the Top, being a full half Mile in difficult Ascent all round, most of it bare Rock, some Parts of it covered with Grass, but dangerous to ascend; the landing is also very hazardous, both in regard of the raging Sea, and the Rock that must be climb'd; yet the Inhabitants are accustomed to carry Burthens both up it and down, and of this I was once a Witness. There is scarce any landing here, except in one Place, and that under favour of a *West* Wind and Neap-Tide. The Waves upon the Rock discover when it is accessible: If they appear white from *St. Kilda*, the Inhabitants do not so much as offer to launch out their Boat, in order to Land in *Soa*,

or any other Isle or Rock, though their Lives were at the Stake. This little Isle is furnished with an excellent Spring; the Grass, being very sweet, feeds five hundred Sheep, each of them having generally two or three Lambs at a Birth, and every Lamb being so fruitful, that it brings forth a Lamb before itself is a Year old. The same is also observed of Lambs in the little Isle adjacent to the Isles of *Harries* and *North-West*. The Sheep in this Isle *Soa* are never milk'd, which disposes them to be the more prolifick: There are none to catch them but the Inhabitants, whom I have seen pursue the Sheep nimbly down the steep descent, with as great freedom as if it had been a plain Field.

This Isle abounds with infinite Numbers of Fowls, as Fulmar, Lavy, Falk, Bowger, &c.

There was a Cock-boat some two Years ago came from a Ship for Water, being favour'd by a perfect Calm; the Men discerned an infinite number of Eggs upon the Rocks, which charm'd them to venture near the Place, and at last purchased a competent Number of them; so careful was one of the Seamen as to put them into his Breeches, which he put off on purpose for this Use. Some of the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* happened to be in the Isle that Day; a Parcel of them were Spectators of this Diverfion, and were offended at it, being done without their consent, therefore they devised an Expedient, which at once robb'd the Seamen of their Eggs and Breeches; and 'twas thus: They found a few loose Stones in the Superfices of the Rock, some of which they let fall down
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perpendicularly above the Seamen, the Terror of which obliged them quickly to remove, abandoning both Breeches and Eggs for their Safety; and those Tarpawlin Breeches were no small Ornament *there*, where all wore girded Plaids.

About two Leagues and a half to the *North* of *St. Kilda*, is the *Rock Stack-Ly*, two hundred Paces in Circumference, and of a great Height, being a perfect Triangle turning to a Point at the Top; it is visible above twenty Leagues distant in a fair Day, and appears blew; there is no Grass nor Earth to cover it, and it is perfectly white with *Solan Geese* sitting on and about it. One would think it next to impossible to climb this Rock, which I expressed, being very close by it; but the Inhabitants assured me it was practicable, and to convince me of the Truth of it, they bid me look up near the Top, where I perceived a Stone Pyramid House, which the Inhabitants built for lodging themselves in it in *August*, at which Time the Season proves inconstant there: This obliges the Inhabitants in point of Prudence to send a competent Number of them to whose Share the Lots fall. These are to land in this Rock some Days before the Time at which the *Solan Geese* use to take wing; and if they neglected this Piece of Foresight, one windy Day might disappoint them of five, six, or seven thousand *Solan Geese*, this Rock affording no less yearly; and they are so very numerous here, that they cannot be divided with respect to their Lands, as elsewhere: Therefore this is the Reason why they send here by Lots, and those who

who are sent aft for the publick Interest; and when they have knocked on the Head all that may be reached, they then carry them to a sharp Point, called the *Castling-Point*, from whence they throw them into the Sea, (the Height being such that they dare not throw them in, but near the Boat) until the Boatmen cry, enough; lest the Sea, which has a strong Current there should carry them off, as it does sometimes, if too many are thrown down at once; and so by degrees getting all in, they return Home; and after their arrival every Man has his Share proportionable to his Lands, and what remains below the Number ten, is due to the Officer as a Branch of his yearly Salary. In this Rock the *Solan* Geese are allowed to hatch their first Eggs, but it is not so in the Rocks next to be described; and that for this Reason, that if all were allowed to hatch at the same Time, the Loss of the Product in one Rock would at the same Time prove the Loss of all the rest, since all would take wing almost at once.

The Isle *Borera* lies near half a League from *Stack-Ly*, to the *North-East* of it, being in Circumference one Mile and an half; it feeds about four hundred Sheep *per Ann.* and would feed more, did not the *Solan* Geese pluck a large Share of the Grass for their Nests.

This Isle is very high and all Rock, being inaccessible except in a Calm, and there is only one Place for landing, looking to the *South*. In the *West* End of this Isle is *Stallir-House*, which is much larger than that of the Female Warrior

Warrior in *St. Kilda*, but of the same Model in all respects; it is all green without like a little Hill: The Inhabitants there have a Tradition that it was built by one *Stallir*, who was a devout Hermit of *St. Kilda*; and had he travelled the Universe he could scarcely have found a more solitary Place for a monastick Life.

There are about forty Stone Pyramids in this Isle, for drying and preserving their Fowls, &c. These little Houses are all of loose Stones, and seen at some Distance: There is also here a very surprizing Number of Fowls, the Grass as well as the Rocks filled with them. The *Solan* Geese possess it for the most part; they are always Masters wherever they come, and have already banished several Species of Fowls from this Isle.

There was an Earthquake here in the Year 1686, which lasted but a few Minutes; it was very amazing to the poor People, who never felt any such Commotion before, or since.

To the *West* of *Borera* lies the Rock *Stack-Narmin*, within Pistol-shot: This Rock is half a Mile in Circumference, and is as inaccessible as any the above-mentioned; there is a Possibility of landing only in two Places, and that but in a perfect Calm neither, and after landing the Danger in climbing it is very great. The Rock has not any Earth or Grass to cover it, and hath a Fountain of good Water issuing out above the Middle of it, which runneth *Easterly*. This Rock abounds with *Solan* Geese and other Fowls: Here are several Stone Pyramids,

mids, as well for Lodging the Inhabitants that attend the Seasons of the *Solan* Geese, as for those that preserve and dry them and other Fowls, &c. The Sea rises and rages extraordinarily upon this Rock: We had the Curiosity, being invited by a fair Day, to visit it for Pleasure, but it was very hazardous to us; the Waves from under our Boat rebounding from off the Rock, and mounting over our Heads wet us all, so that we durst not venture to land, though Men with Ropes were sent before us; and we thought it hazard great enough to be near this Rock: The Wind blew fresh, so that we had much Difficulty to fetch *St. Kilda* again; I remember they brought 800 of the preceeding Year's *Solan* Geese dried in their Pyramids; after our landing, the Geese being cast together in one Heap upon the Ground, the Owners fell to share out each Man his own, at which I was a little surprised, they being all of a Tribe; but having found upon Enquiry that ever Goose carried a distinguishing Mark on the Foot, peculiar to the Owner, I was then satisfied in this Piece of Singularity.

There is a violent Current, whether Ebb or Flood, upon all the Coasts of *St. Kilda*, lesser Isles and Rocks. It is observed to be more impetuous with Spring than Neap-Tides; there are Eddies on all the Coasts, except at a sharp Point where the Tides keep their due Course; the Ebb *Southerly*, and Flood *Northerly*.

A *S. E.* Moon causeth High Tide; the Spring-Tides are always at the Full and New Moon; the two Days following they are higher
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and from that Time decrease until the increase of the Moon again, with which it rises gradually till the second after the Full Moon. This Observation the Seamen find to hold true betwixt the *Mule of Kantyre*, and the *Farrow Head* in *Strathnaver*.

The Land-Fowls produced here are Hawks extraordinary good, Eagles, Plovers, Crows, Wrens, Stone-Chaker, Craker, Cuckow ; this last being very rarely seen here, and that upon extraordinary Occasions, such as the Death of the Proprietor *Mack-Leod*, the Steward's Death, or the Arrival of some notable Stranger. I was not able to forbear laughing at this Relation, as founded upon no Reason but Fancy ; which I no sooner express'd, than the Inhabitants wondered at my Incredulity, saying, that all their Ancestors for a *Series* of several Ages had remarked this Observation to prove true ; and for a further confirmation, appealed to the present Steward, whether he had not known this Observation to have been true, both in his own and his Father's Time, who was also Steward before him ; and after a particular Enquiry upon the whole, he told me that both in his own and Father's Life-Time the Truth of this Observation has been constantly believed ; and that several of the Inhabitants now living have observed the Cuckow to have appeared after the Death of the two last Proprietors, and the two last Stewards, and also before the Arrival of Strangers several Times : It was taken notice of this Year before our Arrival, which they ascribe to my coming there, as the only Stranger ; the Minister having been there before.

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The Sea-fowls are, first, *Gairfowl*, being the stateliest, as well as the largest of all the Fowls here, and above the Size of a *Solan* Goose, of a black Colour, red about the Eyes, a large white Spot under each Eye, a long broad Bill, stands stately, its whole Body erected, its Wings short, it flyeth not at all, lays its Egg upon the bare Rock, which, if taken away, it lays no more for that Year; it is *Palmipes*, or whole-footed, and has the Hatching-spot upon its Breast, *i. e.* a bare Spot from which the Feathers have fallen off with the Heat in Hatching; its Egg is twice as big as that of a *Solan* Goose, and is variously spotted, black, green, and dark; it comes without regard to any Wind, appears the first of *May*, and goes away about the Middle of *June*.

The *Solan* Goose, as some imagine from the *Irish* Word *Sou'l-er*, corrupted and adapted to the *Scottish* Language, *qui oculis irretortis & longinquo respicit prædam*: It equals a tame Goose in Bigness; it is by Measure from the Tip of the Bill to the Extremity of the Foot, thirty-four Inches long, and to the End of the Tail, thirty-nine; the Wings extended very long, there being seventy-two Inches of Distance betwixt the extream Tips; its Bill is long, strait, of a dark Colour, a little crooked at the Point; behind the Eyes the Skin of the Side of the Head is bare of Feathers; the Ears of a mean Size; the Eyes hazel-coloured; it hath four Toes; the Feet and Legs black as far as they are bare; the Plumage is like that of a

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Goose.

Goose. The Colour of the old ones is white all over, excepting the extream Tips of the Wings, which are black, and the Top of the Head, which is yellow, as some think the Effect of Age. The young ones are of a dark brown Colour, turning white after they are a Year old; its Egg, somewhat less than that of a Land-goose, small at each End, and casts a thick Scurf, and has little or no Yolk. The Inhabitants are accustomed to drink it raw, having from Experience found it to be very pectoral, and cephalick. The *Solan* Geese hatch by Turns; when it returns from its fishing, carries along with it five or six Herrings in its Gorget, all entire and undigested, upon whose Arrival at the Nest, the hatching Fowl puts its Head in the Fisher's Throat, and pulls out the Fish with its Bill as with a Pincer, and that with very great Noise; which I had occasion frequently to observe. They continue to pluck Grass for their Nests from their coming in *March* till the young Fowl is ready to fly in *August* or *September*, according as the Inhabitants take or leave the first or second Egg. It's remarkable of them, that they never pluck Grass but on a windy Day; the Reason of which I enquired of the Inhabitants, who said, that a windy Day is the *Solan* Goose's Vacation from fishing, and they bestow it upon this Employment, which proves fatal to many of them; for after their Fatigue they often fall asleep, and the Inhabitants laying hold on this Opportunity, are ready at hand to knock them on the Head; their Food is
Herring,

Herring, Mackarels, and *Syes*; *English* Hooks are often found in the Stomachs both of young and old *Solan* Geese, though there be none of this Kind used nearer than the Isles twenty Leagues distant; the Fish pulling away the Hooks in those Isles go to *St. Kilda*, or are carried by the old Geese thither; whether of the two the Reader is at Liberty to judge.

The *Solan* Geese are always the surest Sign of Herrings, for where-ever the one is seen, the other is always not far off. There is a Tribe of barren *Solan* Geese which have no Nests, and sit upon the bare Rock; these are not the young Fowls of an Year old, whose dark Colour would soon distinguish them, but old ones, in all Things like the rest; these have a Province, as it were, allotted to them, and are in a separated State from the others, having a Rock of two hundred Paces distant from all other; neither do they meddle with, or approach to those hatching, or any other Fowls; they sympathize and fish together; this being told me by the Inhabitants, was afterwards confirmed to me several Times by my own Observation.

The *Solan* Geese have always some of their Number that keep Centinel in the Night-time, and if they are surprized, (as it often happens) all that Flock are taken one after another; but if the Centinel be awake at the Approach of the creeping Fowlers, and hear a Noise, it cries softly, *Grog, Grog*, at which the Flock move not; but if this Centinel see or hear the Fowler approaching, he cries quickly, *Bir, Bir*, which

would seem to import Danger, since immediately after, all the Tribe take Wing, leaving the Fowler empty on the Rock, to return home *re infectâ*, all his Labour for that Night being spent in vain. Here is a large Field of Diversion for *Apollonius Tyanæus*, who is said to have travelled many Kingdoms over, to learn the Language of Beasts and Birds.

Besides this Way of stealing upon them in the Night-time, they are also caught in common Gins of Horse-hair, from which they do struggle less to extricate themselves than any other Fowl, notwithstanding their Bigness and Strength; they are also caught in the Herring Loches with a Board set on purpose to float above Water, upon it a Herring is fixed, which the Goose perceiving, flies up to a competent Height, until he finds himself making a strait Line above the Fish, and then bending his Course perpendicularly piercing the Air, as an Arrow from a Bow, hits the Board, into which he runs his Bill with all his Force irrecoverably, where he is unfortunately taken. The *Solan* Goose comes about the Middle of *March* with a *South-West* Wind, warm Snow, or Rain, and goes away, according as the Inhabitants determine the Time, *i. e.* the taking away, or leaving its Egg, whether at the first, second, or third Time he lays.

The *Fulmar*, in Bigness equals the *Malls* of the second Rate; its Wings very long, the Outside of which are of a greyish white Colour, the Inside and Breast all white, a thick Bill two Inches long, crooked and prominent
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at the End, with wide Nostrils in the Middle of the Bill, all of a pale Colour; the upper Mandible, or Jaw, hangs over the lower on both Sides and Point, its Feet pale, not very broad, with sharp Toes, and a back Toe; it picks its Food out of the Back of live Whales, they say he uses Sorrel with it, for both are found in his Nest; it lays its Egg ordinarily the first, second, or third Day of *May*; which is larger than that of a *Solan* Goose Egg, of a white Colour, and very thin, the Shell so very tender that it breaks in Pieces if the Season proves rainy; when its Egg is once taken away, it lays no more for that Year, as other Fowls do, both a second and third Time; the young Fowl is brought forth in the Middle of *June*, and is ready to take Wing before the twentieth of *July*; it comes in *November*, the sure Messenger of Evil-tidings, being always accompanied with boisterous *West* Winds, great Snow, Rain, or Hail, and is the only Sea-fowl that stays here all the Year round, except the Month of *September*, and Part of *October*. The Inhabitants prefer this, whether young or old, to all other; the old is of a delicate Taste, being a Mixture of fat and lean; the Flesh white, no Blood is to be found but only in its Head and Neck; the Young is all fat, excepting the Bones, having no Blood but what is in his Head; and when the young *Fulmar* is ready to take wing, it being approached, ejects a Quantity of pure Oil out at its Bill, and will make sure to hit any that attacks it, in the Face, though seven Paces distant; this they say

say it uses for its Defence; but the Inhabitants take care to prevent this, by surprizing the Fowl behind, having for this purpose a wooden Dish fixed to the End of their Rods, which they hold before its Bill as it spouts out the Oil; they surprize it also from behind, by taking hold of its Bill, which they tie with a Thread, and upon their return home they untie it with a Dish under to receive the Oil; this Oil is sometimes of a reddish, sometimes of a yellow Colour, and the Inhabitants and other Islanders put a great Value upon it, and use it as a *Catholicon* for Diseases, especially for any aking in the Bones, Stitches, &c. some in the adjacent Isles use it as a Purge, others as a Vomiter; it is hot in Quality, and forces its Passage thro' any wooden Vessel.

The *Fulmar* is a sure Prognosticator of the *West* Wind; if it comes to Land, there is no *West* Wind to be expected for some Time, but if it keeps at Sea, or goes to Sea from the Land, whether the Wind blow from the *South*, *North*, or *East*, or whether it is a perfect Calm, its keeping the Sea is always a certain Prefage of an approaching *West* Wind; from this Quarter it is observed to return with its Prey; its Egg is large as that of a *Solan* Goose, white in Colour, sharp at one End, somewhat blunt at the other.

The *Scraber*, so called in *St. Kilda*; in the *Farn* Islands, *Puffinet*; in *Holland*, the *Greenland Dove*; its Bill small, sharp pointed, a little crooked at the End, and prominent; it is as large as a Pigeon, its whole Body being black,

black, except a white Spot on each Wing; its Egg grey, sharp at one End, blunt at the other.

It comes in the Month of *March*, and in the Night-time, without regard to any Winds; its always invisible, except in the Night, being all Day either abroad at fishing, or all the Day under Ground upon its Nest, which it digs very far under Ground, from whence it never comes in Day-light; it picks its Food out of the live Whale, with which, they say, it uses Sorrel, and both are found in its Nest. The young *Puffin* is fat as the young *Fulmar*, and goes away in *August* if its first Egg be spar'd.

The *Lavy*, so call'd by the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda*; by the *Welch*, a *Guillem*; it comes near to the Bigness of a Duck; its Head, Upper-side of the Neck all downwards of a dark brown, and white Breast, the Bill strait and sharp pointed; the upper Chop hangs over the lower; its Feet and Claws are black.

Its Egg in Bigness is near to that of a Goose Egg, sharp at one End, and blunt at the other; the Colour of it is prettily mix'd with green and black; others of them are of a pale Colour, with red and brown Streaks; but this last is very rare; this Egg for ordinary Food is by the Inhabitants, and others, preferred above all the Eggs had here. This Fowl comes with a *South-West* Wind, if fair, the twentieth of *February*; the Time of its going away depends upon the Inhabitants taking or leaving its first, second, or third Egg: If it stays upon Land for the Space of three Days without Intermis-
sion,

fion, it is a Sign of *Southerly* Wind and fair Weather; but if it goes to Sea before the third expire, it is then a Sign of a Storm.

The Bird, by the Inhabitants called the *Falk*, the *Rasor-Bill* in the *West* of *England*, the *Awk* in the *North*, the *Murre* in *Cornwall*; *Alca Hoeri*. It is a Size less than the *Lavy*; its Head, Neck, Back, and Tail, are black; the Inside to the Middle of the Throat white; the Throat under the Chin of a dusky black; beyond the Nostrils in the upper Mandible, or Jaw, there is a Furrow deeper than that in the *Coulter Neb*, the upper Chop crooked at the End, and hangs over the lower, both having transverse Furrows. It lays its Egg in *May*, its Young take Wing the Middle of *July*, if the Inhabitants do not determine its Stay longer, by taking the Egg; which in Bigness is next to the *Lavy*, or *Guillem* Egg, and is variously spotted, sharp at one End, and blunt at the other.

The *Bouger*, by those in *St. Kilda* so called; *Coulter-Neb* by those in the *Farn* Islands; and in *Cornwall*, *Pope*; it is of the Size of a Pigeon, its Bill is short, broad, and compressed side-wise, contrary to the Bills of Ducks, of a triangular Figure, and ending in a sharp Point, the upper Mandible, or Jaw, arcuate and crooked at the Point; the Nostrils are long Holes produced by the Aperture of the Mouth; the Bill is of two Colours, near the Head, of an Ash-colour, and red towards the Point; the Feet are yellow, the Claws of a dark blue; all the Back black, Breast and Belly white: They breed in Holes under Ground, and come with

a *South-West* Wind about the twenty-second of *March*, lay their Egg the twenty-second of *April*, and produce the Fowl the twenty-second of *May*, if their first Egg be not taken away; it is sharp at one End, and blunt on the other.

The *Affilag* is as large as a *Lint-White*; black Bill, wide Nostrils at the upper Part, crooked at the Point like the *Fulmar's* Bill: It comes about the twenty-second of *March*, without any regard to Winds, lays its Egg about the twentieth of *May*, and produces the Fowl towards the Middle of *October*, then goes away about the End of *November*.

There are three Sorts of *Sea-Malls* here, the first of a grey Colour, in Proportion near to a Goose: The second Sort of *Malls* are considerably less, and of a grey Colour; and the third Sort is a white *Mall*, less than a tame Duck; the Inhabitants call it *Reddag*; it comes the fifteenth of *April* with a *South-West* Wind, lays its Egg about the Middle of *May*, and goes away in the Month of *August*.

The *Tirma*, or *Sea-Pie*, by the Inhabitants call'd *Trilichan*, comes in *May*, goes away in *August*; if it comes the Beginning of *May*, it is a Sign of a good Summer; if later, the contrary is observed. This Fowl is cloven-footed, and consequently swims not.

It is observed of all the Sea-fowls here, that they are fatter in time of hatching than at other Times, the *Solan* Geese excepted.

Every Fowl lays an Egg three different Times (except the *Gair-fowl* and *Fulmar*,
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which lay but once); if the first or second Egg be taken away, every Fowl lays but one other Egg that Year, except the *Sea-Malls*, and they ordinarily lay the third Egg, whether the first and second Eggs be taken away, or no.

The Inhabitants observe, that when the *April* Moon goes far in *May*, the Fowls are ten or twelve Days later in laying their Eggs, than ordinarily they use to be.

The Inhabitants likewise say, that of these Fowls, there first come over some Spies, or Harbingers, especially of the *Solan* Geese, tow'ring about the Islands where their Nests are, and that when they have made a Review thereof they fly away, and in two or three Days after, the whole Tribe are seen coming. Whither the Fowls fly, and where they spend their Winter, the Inhabitants are utterly ignorant of.

The Eggs are found to be of an astringent and windy Quality to Strangers, but it seems, are not so to the Inhabitants, who are used to eat them from the Nest. Our Men upon their Arrival eating greedily of them became costive and feverish, some had the *hemorrhoid* Veins swell'd; Mr. *Campbell* and I were at no small Trouble before we could reduce them to their ordinary Temper; we ordered a Glister for them made of the Roots of *Sedges*, fresh Butter, and Salt, which, being administred, had its wish'd-for Effect; the Inhabitants reckoned this an extraordinary Performance, being, it seems, the first of this Kind they ever had occasion to hear of.

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They preserve their Eggs commonly in their Stone-pyramids, scattering the burnt Ashes of Turf under and about them, to defend them from the Air, Dryness being their only Preservative, and Moisture their Corruption; they preserve them six, seven, or eight Months, as above said; and then they become appetizing and loosening, especially those that begin to turn.

That such a great Number of wild Fowls are so tame, as to be easily taken by the Rods and Gins, is not to be much admired by any who will be at the Pains to consider the Reason, which is the great Inclination of propagating their Species; so powerful is that *σφοδρὴ*, or natural Affection for their Off-spring, that they chuse rather to die upon the Egg, or Fowl, than escape with their own Lives, (which they could do in a Minute) and leave either of these to be destroyed.

It deserves our Consideration to reflect seriously upon the natural Propensity and Sagacity of these Animals in their Kind; which if compared with many rational Creatures, do far outstrip them, and justly obey the Prescript of their Natures, by living up unto that Instinct that Providence has given them.

The Inhabitants of this Isle are originally descended of those of the adjacent Isles, *Lewis, Harries, South and North Vist, Skiy*: Both Sexes are naturally very grave, of a fair Complexion; such as are not fair are Natives only for an Age or two; but their Offspring proves fairer than themselves.

There are several of them would be reckoned among Beauties of the first Rank, were they upon a Level with others' in their Dress.

Both Men and Women are well proportioned, nothing differing from those of the Isles and Continent. The present Generation comes short of the last in Strength and Longevity. They shew'd us huge big Stones carried by the Fathers of some of the Inhabitants now living; any of which is a Burthen too heavy for any two of the present Inhabitants to raise from the Ground; and this Change is all within the Compals of forty Years. But notwithstanding this, any one inhabiting *St. Kilda*, is always reputed stronger than two of the Inhabitants belonging to the Isle of *Harries*, or the adjacent Isles. Those of *St. Kilda* have generally but very thin Beards, and those too do not appear till they arrive at the Age of thirty, and in some not till after thirty-five; they have all but a few Hairs upon the upper Lip, and Point of the Chin.

Both Sexes have a Lisp, but more especially the Women, neither of the two pronouncing the Letters, *d*, *g*, or *r*. I remember a Story of a *Craker* that lisped (two Years ago,) the Boys of the Place took notice of, and were pleased to hear him, and to ape his Cry; one of the Steward's Men beholding them, enquired the Meaning of their Noise, which he told them was ridiculous; they return'd answer, That it was worth his while to behold the Sport of a lisping *Craker*, whom they aped; but the Man replied, That they played the Fool,

Fool, for the *Craker* diverted himself in lisping after them, and charged them with that Imperfection; the Boys no sooner heard this, but away they ran, and left the *Craker* to cry and lisp as he pleased.

There are some of both Sexes who have a Genius for Poetry, and are great Admirers of Musick: The Trump or *Jewish* Harp is all the musical Instrument they have, which disposes them to dance mightily. Their Sight is extraordinary good, and they can discern Things at a great Distance: They have very good Memories, and are resolute in their Undertakings, chaste and honest, and the Men reputed jealous of their Wives. They argue closely, and with less Passion than other Islanders, or those inhabiting the Highlands on the Continent.

They are reputed very cunning, and there is scarce any circumventing of them in Traffick and Bartering; the Voice of one is the Voice of all the rest, they being all of a Piece, their common Interest uniting them firmly together. They marry very young, the Women at about thirteen or fourteen Years of Age; and are nice in examining the Degrees of Consanguinity before they marry. They give suck to their Children for the Space of two Years. The most antient Person among them at present, is not above eighty Years of Age.

Providence is very favourable to them in this, that they are not infested with several Diseases which are so predominant in the other Parts of the World; the Distemper that most prevails here,

here, is a spotted Fever, and that too confin'd to one Tribe, to whom this Disease is, as it were, become hereditary; others are liable to Fluxes, Fevers, Stitches, the Spleen; for all which they have but very few Remedies; to get away their Stitches, they commonly lie upon a warm Hearth, with the Side affected downwards; this they look upon to be almost infallible for dispelling the Humour, or Wind, that torments them. The Small-pox hath not been heard of in this Place for several Ages, except in one Instance, of two of the Steward's Retinue, who not having been well recovered of it, upon their Arrival here, infected one Man only.

The Plants produced here, are *Lapathum vulgare*, the common Dock, Scurvy-grass round, being large as the Palm of the Hand, *Mille-Foil*, *Bursa Pastoris*, Silver-weed, or Argentine, Plantain, Sage, Chicken-weed, Sorrel, long, or the common Sorrel; All-hail, or *Siderites*, the *Sea-Pinck*, *Tormentil*, the *Scurf upon the Stones*, which has a drying and healing Quality, and is likewise used for dying. The Inhabitants are ignorant of the Virtues of these Herbs; they never had a Potion of Physick given them in their Lives, nor know any Thing of Phlebotomy; a Physician could not expect his Bread in this Commonwealth.

They have generally good Voices, and sound Lungs; to this the *Solan* Goose Egg sup'd raw doth not a little contribute; they are seldom troubled with a Cough, except at the Steward's landing;

landing; which is no less rare, than firmly believed by the Inhabitants of the adjacent Isles.

Those of *St. Kilda*, upon the whole, gave me this following Account, That they always contract a Cough upon the Steward's landing, and it proves a great deal more troublesome to them in the Night-time, they then distilling a great deal of Phlegm; this Indisposition continues for some ten, twelve, or fourteen Days; the most sovereign Remedy against this Disease, is their great and beloved *Catholicon*, the *Giben*, i. e. the Fat of their Fowls, with which they stuff the Stomach of the *Solan* Goose, in Fashion of a Pudding; this they put in the Infusion of Oatmeal, which in their Language they call *Brochan*; but it is not so effectual now as at the Beginning, because of the frequent use of it. I told them plainly, That I thought all this Notion of Infection was but a meer Fancy, and that, at least, it could not always hold; at which they seemed offended, saying, That never any, before the Minister and myself, was heard to doubt of the Truth of it; which is plainly demonstrated upon the landing of every Boat; adding further, That every Design was always for some End, but here there was no room for any, where nothing could be proposed; but for Confirmation of the Whole, they appealed to the Case of Infants at the Breast, who were likewise very subject to this Cough, but could not be capable of affecting it, and therefore, in their Opinion, they were infected by such as lodged in their Houses. There were scarce young or old in the Isle whom I did not examine

examine particularly upon this Head, and all agreed in the Confirmation of it. They add farther, That when any foreign Goods are brought thither, then the Cough is of longer Duration than otherwise. They remark, that if the Fever has been among those of the Steward's Retinue, though before their Arrival there, some of the Inhabitants are infected with it. If any of the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* chance to live, though but a short Space, in the Isles of *Harries*, *Skeiy*, or any of the adjacent Isles, they become meagre, and contract such a Cough, that the *Giben* must be had, or else they must return to their native Soil. This *Giben* is more sovereign for removing of Coughs, being used by any other Islanders, than those of *St. Kilda*, because they love to have it frequently in their Meat as well as Drink, by which too frequent Use of it, it loses its Virtue; it was remarkable, that after this infected Cough was over, we Strangers, and the Inhabitants of *St. Kilda*, making up the Number of about two hundred and fifty, though we had frequently assembled upon the Occasion of divine Service, yet neither young nor old among us all did so much as once cough more.

Some thirteen Years ago the Leprosy broke out among them, and some of their Number died by it; there are two Families at present labouring under this Disease. The Symptoms of it are, their Feet begin to fail, their Appetite declines, their Faces become too red, and break out in Pimples, they get a Hoarseness, and their Hair falls off from their Heads, the
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Crown of it exulcerates and blisters, and lastly, their Beards grow thinner than ordinary.

This Disease may in a large Measure be ascribed to their gross Feeding, and that on those fat Fowls, as the *Fulmar* and the *Solan* Geese; the latter of which they keep a whole Year, without Salt or Pepper to preserve them; these they eat roasted or boiled.

One of these Lepers, being with me one Day at the *Fulmar*-Rock, importuned me to give him a Remedy for his Disease; I began to chide him for his ill Diet in feeding so grossly; but finding the poor Fellow ready and implicitly disposed to do whatever I should enjoin, I bid him take Example from the *Fulmar*, who, they say, feeds sometimes on *Sorrel*; this was a very surprizing Advice to him, but when he considered that the *Fulmar* required *Sorrel* to qualify the *Whale*, he was the sooner persuaded that his *Giben* and *Goose* might require the same; I advised him further, to abstain from the *Giben* and *fat Fowls*, which was no small Trouble to him, for he loved them exceedingly; I obliged him likewise to mount the *Hill Cona-ger*, a Mile in Height, once every Morning and Evening, and he was very careful to comply with those Injunctions, for the space of three Days; in which short Time he made some Advances towards recovering his almost lost Speech and Appetite, for his Throat was well nigh quite stopp'd up; he continued this Practice a Week longer, by which means he mended very considerably; and I left him fully resolved to proceed in this Practice, until he was perfectly

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restored

restored to his former state of Health. I had Occasion to observe another of these Lepers rave for some Minutes, and when he was recovered to his right Mind, he wrought at his ordinary Employment.

The Inhabitants are *Christians*, much of the primitive Temper, neither inclined to Enthusiasm nor to Popery. They Swear not the common Oaths that prevail in the World; when they refuse or deny to give what is asked of them, they do it with a strong Affelevation, which they express emphatically enough in their Language to this purpose, *You are no more to have it, than if God had forbid it*; and thus they express the highest Degree of Passion. They do not so much as name the Devil once in their Lifetimes.

They leave off Working after twelve of the Clock on *Saturday*, as being an ancient Custom delivered down to them from their Ancestors, and go no more to it till *Monday Morning*. They believe in *God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost*; and a State of future Happiness and Misery, and that all Events, whether good or bad, are determined by *God*. They use a set Form of Prayer at the hoisting of their Sails; they lie down, rise, and begin their Labours in the Name of God. They have a Notion, that Spirits are embodied; these they fancy to be locally in Rocks, Hills, and where-ever they list in an Instant.

There are three Chapels in this Isle, each of them with one End towards the *East*, the other towards the *West*; the Altar always placed at the

the *East End*: The first of these is called *Christ Chapel*, near the Village; it is covered and thatched after the same manner with their Houses; there is a brazen *Crucifix* lies upon the Altar, not exceeding a Foot in Length, the Body is compleatly done, distended, and having a Crown on, all in the crucified Posture; they have it in great Reverence, though they pay no kind of Adoration or Worship to it, nor do they either handle or see it, except upon the Occasions of Marriage, and swearing decisive Oaths, which puts an end to all Strife, and both these Ceremonies are publicly performed. The Church-yard is about an hundred Paces in Circumference, and is fenced in with a little stone Wall, within which they bury their Dead; they take care to keep the Church-yard perfectly clean, void of any kind of Nastiness, and their Cattel have no access to it. The Inhabitants, young and old, come to the Church-yard every *Sunday Morning*, the Chapel not being capacious enough to receive them; here they devoutly say the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and ten Comandments.

They observe the Festivals of *Christmas*, *Easter*, *Good-Friday*, *St. Colomba's Day*, and that of *All Saints*; upon this they have an anniversary Cavalcade, the Number of their Horses not exceeding eighteen; these they mount by turns, having neither Saddle nor Bridle of any kind, except a Rope, which manages the Horse only on one side; they ride from the Shoar to the House, and then after each Man has performed his Tour, the Show is at an end. They

very charitable to their Poor, of whom there are not at present above three, and these carefully provided for, by this little Commonwealth, each particular Family contributing according to their Ability for their Necessities; their Condition is enquired into weekly, or monthly, as Occasions serve; but more especially at the Time of their Festivals; they slay some Sheep on purpose to be distributed among the Poor, with Bread proportionable; they are charitable to Strangers in Distress; this they had Opportunity to express to a Company of *French* and *Spaniards* who lost their Ship at *Rokol* in the Year 1686, and came in, in a Pinnace to *St. Kilda*, where they were plentifully supplied with Barly-Bread, Butter, Cheese, *Solan* Geese, Eggs, &c. both Seamen and Inhabitants were *Barbarians* one to another, the Inhabitants speaking only the *Irish* Tongue, to which the *French* and *Spaniards* were altogether Strangers. Upon their landing they pointed to the *West*, naming *Rokol* to the Inhabitants, and after that they pointed downward with their Finger, signifying the sinking and perishing of their Vessel; they shewed them *Rokol* in the Sea Map, far *West* off *St. Kilda*. This, and much more, the Masters of these Ships told to a Priest in the next Island who understood *French*. The Inhabitants acquainted me that the Pinnace which carried the Seamen from *Rokol* was so very low, that the Crew added a Foot Height of Canvas round it all, and began to work at it upon *Sunday*, at which the Inhabitants were astonished, and being highly dissatisfied, plucked the

the Hatches and other Instruments out of their Hands, and did not restore them till *Monday Morning*.

The Inhabitants had occasion to shew great Kindness to a Boat's Crew that was driven from the opposite Isle *South West*, whither they themselves were driven afterwards, and where they were treated with no less Civility and Kindness than the above-mentioned had been by them: So that it may be said of them with great Justice, that their Charity is as extensive as the Occasions of it.

The second of these Chapels bears the Name of St. *Columba*; the third of St. *Brianan*; both built after the Manner of *Christ's Chapel*; having Church-yards belonging to them; and they are a quarter of a Mile distance betwixt each Chapel.

They told me of a Ship that dropp'd Anchor in the Mouth of the Bay the preceding Year, and that the Lowlanders aboard her were not Christians; I enquired if their Interpreter, who they said spoke bad *Irish*, had owned this to be a Truth, they answered, *not*; but that they knew this by their Practices, and that in these three Particulars; the first was the working up-on *Sunday*, carrying several Boats full of Stones aboard for Ballast; the second was the taking away some of their Cows without any return for them, except a few *Irish* Copper Pieces; and the third was the Attempt made by them to ravish their Women, a Practice altogether unknown in St. *Kilda*, where there has not been one Instance of Fornication or Adultery for many

many Ages before this Time; I remember they told me, that the Bribe offered for Debauching the poor Women, was a piece of broad Money, than which there could be nothing less charming in a Place where the Inhabitants cannot distinguish a Guinea from Sixpence.

Their Marriages are celebrated after the following Manner; when any two of them have agreed to take one another for Man and Wife, the Officer who presides over them, summons all the Inhabitants of both Sexes to *Christ's Chapel*, where being assembled, he enquires publicly if there be any lawful Impediment why these Parties should not be joined in the Bond of Matrimony? And if there be no Objection to the contrary, he then enquires of the Parties if they are resolved to live together in Weal and Woe, &c. After their Assent, he declares them married Persons, and then desires them to ratify this their solemn Promise in the Presence of God and the People; in order to which the Crucifix is tender'd to them, and both put their right Hands upon it, as the Ceremony by which they swear Fidelity one to another during their Life-time.

Mr. *Campbel*, the Minister, married in this Manner fifteen Pair of the Inhabitants on the seventeenth of *June*, who immediately after their Marriage, join'd in a country Dance, having only a Bagpipe for their Musick, which pleased them exceedingly.

They Baptize in the following Manner; the Parent calls in the Officer, or any of his Neighbours to Baptize his Child, and another to be
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Sponsor; he that performs the Minister's Part being told what the Child's Name is to be, says *A. B. I Baptize thee to your Father and your Mother, in the Name of thee Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; then the Sponsor takes the Child in his Arms, as doth his Wife as Godmother, and ever after this there is a Friendship between the Parent and the Sponsor; which is esteemed so sacred and inviolable, that no Accident, how cross soever, is able to set them at Variance; and it reconciles such as have been at Enmity formerly.

This Isle belongs in Property to the Laird of *Mack-Leod*, Head of one of the ancientest Families of *Scotland*; it is never farmed, but most commonly bestowed upon some Favourite, one of his Friends or Followers, who is called *Steward of the Isle*. The present Steward's Name is *Alexander Mack-Leod*, who pays yearly to his Master an Acknowledgement of the various Products of this Isle. This Steward Visits *St. Kilda* every Summer, and upon his Arrival he and his Retinue have all the Milk in the Isle bestowed on them in a Treat; there is another bestowed on them upon *St. Columba's Day*, the fifteenth of *June* We had a share of this second Treat. The Stewards Retinue consist of forty, fifty, or sixty Persons, and among them, perhaps, the most meagre in the Parish are carried thither to be recruited with good Chear; but this Retinue is now retrenched, as also some of their ancient and unreasonable Exactions.

The Steward lives upon the Charge of the Inhabitants until the Time that the *Solan Geese* are

are ready to fly, which the Inhabitants think long enough; the daily Allowance paid by them is very regularly exacted, with regard to their respective Proportions of Lands and Rocks. There is not a parcel of Men in the World more scrupulously nice and punctilious in maintaining their Liberties and Properties than these are, being most religiously fond of their ancient Laws and Statutes; nor will they by any means consent to alter their first (though unreasonable) Constitutions; and we had a pregnant Instance of this their Genius for preserving their ancient Customs; they have unchangeably continued their first and ancient Measures, as the *Maile*, *Amir*, and *Cubit*; this *Maile* contains ten Pecks; the *Amir* which they at present make use of, is probably the *Hebrew Omer*, which contains near two Pecks; the *Cubit*, or in their Language, *Lave Keile*, i. e. an Hand of Wood, is the Distance from the Elbow to the Finger's Ends; this they only use in measuring their Boats; the *Amir* or rather *half Amir*, as they call it, is composed of thin Boards, and as they confess has been used these fourscore Years; in which tract of Time it is considerably fallen short of the Measure of which it was at first, which they themselves do not altogether deny: The *Steward* to compensate this Loss, pretends to a received Custom of adding the Hand of him that Measures the Corn to the *Amir* side, holding some of the Barley above the due Measure; which the Inhabitants complain of as unreasonable; the *Steward* to satisfy them, offered to refer the Debate to Mr. *Campbel's* Decision and mine,

mine, they themselves being to propose their Objections, and two of his Retinue, who were well versed in the Customs of this Place, in Time of some of the former Stewards, being appointed to answer them, and he promised that he would acquiesce in the Decision, though it should prove to his Prejudice; but they would not alter that Measure if *Mack-Leod* did not expressly Command the same to be done, being persuaded that he would not in the least deviate from what his and their Ancestors had had in such Esteem for so many Ages. So great was their Concern for this *Amir*, that they unanimously determined to send the Officer as Envoy (according to the ancient Custom) to represent their case to *Mack-Leod*; this was the Result of a general Council, in which the Master of every Family, has a Vote, since every Family pays this Officer an *Amir* of Barly *per Annum*, to maintain his Character.

This Officer as such, is obliged to adjust the respective Proportions of Lands, Grass, and Rocks, and what else could be claimed by virtue of the last *Tack*, or Lease, which is never longer than for three Years, condescended to by the Steward; nay, he is obliged always to dispute with the Steward for what is due to any of them, and never to give over until he has obtained his Demand, or put the Steward into such a Passion, that he gives the Officer at least three Strokes with his Cudgel over the Crown of his Head; after these three Strokes he has done the utmost that is required of him by their ancient Customs. I enquired of the Officer (who told

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me this Passage) what if the Steward give him but one Blow over the Crown? he answered, That the Inhabitants would not be satisfied if he did not so far plead as to irritate the Steward to give both a second and third Blow. I had the farther Curiosity to enquire of the Steward himself if he was wont to treat the Officer in this Manner; who answered, that it was an ancient Custom, which in his short Time he had not had occasion to practice, but if he should, he would not confine himself to the Number of three Blows, if the Officer should prove indiscreet.

The Steward bestows some Acres of Land upon the Officer for serving him and the Inhabitants; he gives him likewise the Bonnet worn by himself upon his going out of the Island; the Stewards Wife leaves with the Officer's Wife the *Kerch*, or Head-dress worn by her self, and she bestows likewise upon her an Ounce of *Indigo*. The Steward has a large Cake of Barly presented to him by the Officer at every Meal, and it must be made so large as shall be sufficient to satisfy three Men at a Time, and by way of Eminence it is baked in the Form of a Triangle, and furrowed twice round; the Officer is likewise obliged to furnish the Steward with Mutton, or Beef, to his Dinner every *Sunday* during his Residence in the Island.

Notwithstanding these reciprocal Acts of Kindness, this Officer must be allowed to go in Quality of an Envoy to *Mack-Leod* against the Steward, upon extraordinary Occasions, if the
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Commonwealth have any Grievances to redress, as that of the *Amir* now depending; but the Commission given him is limited, the whole Boat's Crew being joined in Commission with him, and are a Check upon him, lest his Dependence upon the Steward might be apt to bias him; he makes his Entry very submissively, taking off his Bonnet at a great Distance when he appears in *Mack-Leod's* Presence, bowing his Head and Hand low near to the Ground; his Retinue doing the like behind him one after another, making, as it were, a Chain; this being their Manner of Walking both at Home and abroad; for they Walk not a-breast as others do; and in making their Purchase among the Rocks, one leads the Van, and the rest follow.

The Number of People inhabiting this Isle at present, is above One hundred and eighty, who in the Steward's Absence are governed by one *Donald Mack-Gill-Colm*, as their *Meijre*, which imports an *Officer*: This Officer was anciently chosen, or at least approved of by the People, before the Steward settled him in his Office; but now the Stewards have the Nomination of him absolutely: He is President over them in all their Debates, takes care that the Lots be managed impartially, that none to whose Share they fall may have cause to repine, whether it be for the Steward's Service, or that of the Commonwealth; the use of the Lots, together with the Crucifix, do mightily contribute to their Peace and Quiet, keeping every one within his proper Bounds. It must needs be a very odd

Case indeed that falls not within the compass of these two to determine. When any Case happens which does not fall under the Decision of Lots, and it is capable of being decided only by the Oath of the Parties, then the Crucifix must determine the Matter; and if it should prove to be a Case of the highest Importance, any of them is at Liberty to refer it to his Neighbour's Oath, without any Suspicion of Perjury; provided the Ceremony of touching the Crucifix with their Right-hand be observed; and this is always publickly performed.

If any Man is guilty of beating his Neighbour, he is liable to a Fine not exceeding the Value of two Shillings *Sterling*. If any has beat his Neighbour so as to draw Blood from him, he is liable to a Fine, but it must not exceed four Shillings and Six-pence. These Crimes are complained of by the Officer to the Steward upon his Arrival, who either exacts the whole, or dispences with the Fines, as he judges convenient for their future Quiet and Peace.

They have only one common *Kiln*, which serves them all by Turns, as the Lots fall to their Share: He whose Lot happens to be last does not resent it at all.

The Officer by virtue of his Place, is obliged through a point of Honour to be the first that lands in the lesser Isles and Rocks, from whence they carry their Fowls and Eggs, and not without some Trouble too. This Notion of Honour exposes him to frequent Dangers; and, perhaps, it may not be unpleasant to describe it as I have seen it practised; and 'tis thus;
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When they have come as near to the Rock as they think may consist with the Safety of the Boat, which is not a little tossed by the raging of the Sea, those, whose turn it is, are employed with Poles to keep off the Boat, that is in great Danger, in regard of the Violence of the Waves beating upon the Rock; and they are to watch the Opportunity of the calmest Wave: Upon the first Appearance of which, the Officer jumps out upon the Rock; if there be any apparent Danger, he ties a Rope about his Middle, with one end of it fastened to the Boat; if he has landed safe, he then fixes his Feet in a secure Place, and by the Assistance of this Rope draws up all the Crew to him, except those whose turn it is to look after the Boat; but if in jumping out he falls into the Sea, (as his Fortune is so to do sometimes) then he is drawn into the Boat again by that Part of the Rope that is so fastened to it, and the next then whose turn it is must try his Fortune. The Officer after his fall being supposed to be sufficiently fatigu'd, so that he is not obliged to adventure his Person again to a second Hazard upon this Occasion; especially he being exposed to the greatest Danger that offers upon their landing when they return back again to the Isle, where the Sea often rages, he being obliged then by Virtue of his Office to stay in the Boat after the whole Crew are landed, where he must continue employing his Pole, until the Boat be either brought safe to Land, or else split upon the Rocks.

They furnish themselves with Ropes to carry
them

them through the more inaccessible Rocks; of these Ropes there are only three in the whole Island, each of them twenty four Fathoms in length; and they are either knit together and lengthned by tying the one to the other, or used seperately as Occasion requires: The chief Thing upon which the Strength of these Ropes depends, is Cows Hides salted, and cut out in one long Piece; this they twist round the ordinary Rope of Hemp, which secures it from being cut by the Rocks; they join sometimes at the lower end two Ropes, one of which they tie about the Middle of one Climber, and another about the middle of another, that these may assist one another in case of a fall; but the Misfortune is, that sometimes the one happens to pull down the other, and so both fall into the Sea; but if they escape (as they do commonly of late) they get an incredible Number of Eggs and Fowls.

The Ropes belong to the Commonwealth, and are not to be used without the general Consent of all; the Lots determine the Time, Place, and Persons for using them, they get together in three Days a much greater Number of Fowls and Eggs than their Boat is able to carry away, and therefore what is over and above they leave behind in their Stone-Pyramids. They catch their Fowls with Gins made of Horse Hair, these are tied to the end of their Fishing-Rods, with which the Fowlers creep through the Rocks indiscernably, putting the Noose over their Heads about their Necks, and so draw them instantly; they use likewise Hair
Gins,

Gins, which they set upon plain Rocks, both the Ends fastened by a Stone, and so catch forty or fifty a Day with them.

The Inhabitants, I must tell you, run no small Danger in the Quest of the Fowls and Eggs, insomuch, that I fear it would be thought an *Hyperbole* to relate the Inaccessibleness, Steepness, and Height of those formidable Rocks which they venture to climb. I myself have seen some of them climb up the Corner of a Rock with their Backs to it, making use only of their Heels and Elbows, without any other Assistance; and they have this Way acquired a Dexterity in climbing beyond any I ever yet saw; Necessity has made them apply themselves to this, and Custom has perfected them in it; so that it is become familiar to them almost from their Cradles, the young Boys of three Years old begin to climb the Walls of their Houses: Their frequent Discourses of climbing, together with the fatal End of several in the Exercise of it, is the same to them, as that of fighting and killing is with Soldiers, and so is become as familiar and less formidable to them, than otherwise certainly it would be. I saw two young Men, to whose Share the Lots fell in *June* last, for taking the Nest of a Hawk (which was in a high Rock above the Sea) bringing home the Hawks in a few Minutes, without any Assistance at all.

Their Dogs are likewise very dextrous in climbing and bringing out from their Holes those Fowls which build their Nests far under Ground,

Ground, such as the *Scraber*, *Puffinet*, &c. which they carry in their Teeth to their Masters, letting them fall upon the Ground before them, though asleep.

The Inhabitants speak the *Irish* Tongue only ; they express themselves slowly but pertinently, and have the same Language with those of *Harries* and other Isles, who retain the *Irish* in its Purity.

Their Habit antiently was of Sheepskins, which has been wore by several of the Inhabitants now living ; the Men at this Day wear a short Doublet reaching to their Waste, about that a double Plait of Plad, both Ends joined together with the Bone of a *Fulmar* ; this Plad reaches no further than their Knees, and is above the Haunches girt about with a Belt of Leather ; they wear short Caps of the same Colour and Shape with the *Capuchins*, but shorter ; and on *Sundays* they wear Bonnets ; some of late have got Breeches, and they are wide and open at the Knees ; they wear Cloth Stockings, and go without Shoes in the Summer-time ; their Leather is dressed with the Roots of *Tormentil*.

The Women wear upon their Heads a Linnen Dress, strait before, and drawing to a small Point behind below the Shoulders, a Foot and an Half in Length, and a Lock of about sixty Hairs hanging down each Cheek, reaching to their Breasts, the lower End tied with a Knot ; their Plad, which is the upper Garment, is fastened upon their Breasts with a large round Buckle of Brass in Form of a Circle ;

Circle; the Buckle antiently worn by the Steward's Wife was of Silver, but the present Steward's Wife makes no use of either this Dress or Buckle. The Women inhabiting this Isle wear no Shoes or Stockings in the Summer-time; the only and ordinary Shoes they wear, are made of the Necks of *Solan* Geese, which they cut above the Eyes, the Crown of the Head serves for the Heel, the whole Skin being cut close at the Breast, which End being sowed, the Foot enters into it, as into a Piece of narrow Stocking: This Shoe doth not wear above five Days, and if the Down-side be next to the Ground, then not above three or four Days; but, however, there is Plenty of them, some Thousands being catch-ed, or, as they term it, *Stolen* every *March*.

Both Sexes wear coarse *Flannel* Shirts, which they put off when they go to Bed; they thicken their Cloaths upon *Flakes*, or Mats of Hay twisted and woven together in small Ropes; they work hard at this Employment, first making use of their Hands, and at last of their Feet; and when they are at this Work, they commonly sing all the Time, one of their Number acting the Part of a prime Chantress, whom all the rest follow and obey.

They put the Faces of their Dead towards the East when they bury them, and bewail the Death of their Relations excessively, and upon those Occasions make doleful Songs, which they call *Laments*. Upon the News of the late *Mack-Leod's* Death, they aban-

doned their Houses, mourning two Days in the Field ; they kill a Cow or Sheep before the Interment, but if it be in the Spring, this Ceremony then is delayed, because the Cattle are at that Time poor and lean ; but, however, they are to be killed as soon as ever they become fat.

Their ordinary Food is Barley and some Oat-Bread baked with Water ; they eat all the Fowls, already described, being dried in their Stone Houses, without any Salt or Spice to preserve them ; and all their Beef and Mutton is eaten fresh, after the same Manner they use the *Giben*, or Fat of the Fowls : This *Giben* is by daily Experience found to be a sovereign Remedy for the healing of green Wounds ; it cured a *Cancer* in an Inhabitant of the Isle of *Lewis*, and a *Fistula* in one *Nicholson* of *Sky*, in *St. Mary's* Parish ; this was performed by *John Mack-Lean*, Chirurgeon there : They boil the Sea-Plants, *Dulse* and *Slake*, melting the *Giben* upon them instead of Butter, and upon the Roots of Silver-Weed and Dock boiled ; and also with their Scurvy-Grass stoved, which is very purgative, and here it is of an extraordinary Breadth. They use this *Giben* with their Fish, and it is become the common Vehicle that conveys all their Food down their Throats. They are undone for want of Salt, of which as yet they are but little sensible ; they use no set Times for their Meals, but are determined purely by their Appetites.

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They use only the Ashes of *Sea-Ware* for salting their Cheese, and the shortest (which grows in the Rocks) is only used by them, that being reckoned the mildest.

Their Drink is Water or Whey commonly : They brew Ale but rarely, using the Juice of *Nettle-Roots*, which they put in a Dish with a little Barley-Meal Dough ; these *Sowens* (*i. e.* Flummery) being blended together, produce good Yest, which puts their Wort into a Ferment, and makes good Ale ; so that when they drink plentifully of it, it disposes them to dance merrily.

They preserve the *Solan* Geese in their Pyramids for the Space of a Year, slitting them in the Back, for they have no Salt to keep them with. They have built above five hundred Stone Pyramids for their Fowls, Eggs, &c.

We made particular Enquiry after the Number of *Solan* Geese consumed by each Family the Year before we came there, and it amounted to twenty-two Thousand six Hundred in the whole Island, which they said was less than they ordinarily did, a great many being lost by the Badness of the Season, and the great Current into which they must be thrown when they take them, the Rock being of such an extraordinary Height, that they cannot reach the Boat.

There is one Boat sixteen Cubits long, which serves the whole Commonwealth ; it is very curiously divided into Apartments proportionable to their Lands and Rocks ; every Individual

dual has his Space distinguished to an Hair's Breadth, which his Neighbour cannot encroach so much as to lay an Egg upon it.

Every Partner in the Summer provides a large Turf to cover his Space of the Boat, thereby defending it from the Violence of the Sun, which (in its Meridian Height) reflects most vehemently from the Sea, and Rock, upon which the Boat lies; at the drawing of it up, both Sexes are employed pulling a long Rope at the Fore-end; they are determined in uniting their Strength, by the Cryer, who is therefore excepted from being obliged to draw the Boat.

There is but one Steel and Tinder-Box in all this Commonwealth; the Owner whereof fails not upon every Occasion of striking Fire in the lesser Isles, to go thither, and exact three Eggs, or one of the lesser Fowls from each Man as a Reward for his Service; this by them is called the *Fire-Penny*, and this Capitation is very uneasy to them; I bid them try their Chrystal with their Knives, which when they saw it did strike Fire, they were not a little astonished, admiring at the Strangeness of the Thing, and at the same Time accusing their own Ignorance, considering the Quantity of Chrystal growing under the Rock of their Coast. This Discovery has delivered them from the *Fire-Penny Tax*, and so they are no longer liable to it.

They have likewise a *Pot-Penny Tax*, which is exacted in the same Manner as the *Fire-Penny* was, but is much more reasonable;
for

for the Pot is carried to the inferior Isles for the publick Use, and is in Hazard of being broken; so that the Owners may justly exact upon this Score, since any may venture his Pot when he pleases. When they have bestowed some Hours in fowling about the Rocks, and caught a competent Number, they sit down near the Face of it to refresh themselves, and in the mean time they single out the fattest of their Fowls, plucking them bare, which they carry Home to their Wives, or Mistresses, as a great Present, and it is always accepted very kindly from them, and could not otherwise be, without great Ingratitude, seeing these Men ordinarily expose themselves to very great Danger, if not hazard their Lives, to procure those Presents for them.

In the Face of the Rock, *South* from the Town, is the famous Stone, known by the Name of the *Mistress-Stone*; it resembles a Door exactly, and is in the very Front of this Rock, which is twenty or thirty Fathom perpendicular in Height, the Figure of it being discernable about the Distance of a Mile: Upon the Lintel of this Door, every Batchelor-Woor is by an ancient Custom obliged in Honour to give a Specimen of his Affection for the Love of his Mistress; and it is thus; He is to stand on his left Foot, having the one half of his Sole over the Rock, and then he draws the right Foot further out to the left, and in this Posture bowing, he puts both his Fists further out to the right Foot; and then after he has performed this, he has acquired no small

small Reputation, being always after it accounted worthy of the finest Mistress in the World: They firmly believe that this Achievement is always attended with the desired Success.

This being the Custom of the Place, one of the Inhabitants very gravely desired me to let him know the Time limited by me for trying of this Piece of Gallantry, before I design'd to leave the Place, that he might attend me; I told him his Performance would have a quite contrary Effect upon me, by robbing me both of my Life and Mistress at the same Moment; but he was of a contrary Opinion, and insisted on the good Fortune attending it; but I must confess all his Arguments were too weak to make me attempt the Experiment.

They take their Measures in going to the lesser Islands from the Appearance of the Heavens; for when it is clear or cloudy in such a Quarter, it is a Prognostick of Wind or fair Weather; and when the Waves are high on the *East* Point of the Bay, it is an infallible Sign of a Storm, especially if they appear very white, even though the Weather be at that Time Calm.

If the Waves in the Bay make a Noise as they break before they beat upon the Shore, it is also an infallible Forerunner of a *West* Wind; if a black Cloud appears above the *South* Side of the Bay, a *South* Wind follows some Hours afterwards. It is observed of the Sea betwixt *St. Kilda*, and the Isles *Lewis*, *Harries*, &c. that it rages more with a *North* Wind, than
when

when it Blows from any other Quarter. And it is likewise observed to be less raging with the *South Wind* than any other.

They know the Time of the Day by the Motion of the Sun from one Hill or Rock to another; upon either of these the Sun is observed to appear at different Times; and when the Sun doth not appear, they Measure the Day by the ebbing and flowing of the Sea, which they can tell exactly, though they should not see the Shore for some Days together: Their Knowledge of the Tides depends upon the Changes of the Moon, which they likewise observe, and are very nice in it.

They use for their Diversion short Clubs and Balls of Wood; the Sand is a fair Field for this Sport and Exercise, in which they take great Pleasure and are very nimble at it; they play for some Eggs, Fowls, Hooks, or Tobacco; and so eager are they for Victory, that they strip themselves to their Shirts to obtain it: They use swimming and diving, and are very expert in both.

The Women have their Assemblies in the Middle of the Village, where they discourse of their Affairs; but in the mean Time employing their Distaff, and Spinning, in order to make their Blankets; they sing and jest for Diversion, and in their Way, understand Poetry, and make Rhimes in their Language. Both Men and Women are very courteous; as often as they passed by us every Day, they saluted us with their ordinary Compliment of *God save you;*

you ; each of them making their respective Courtesies.

Both Sexes have a great Inclination to Novelty ; and, perhaps, any Thing may be thought new with them that is but different from their Way of managing Land, Cattle, Fowls, &c. A Parcel of them were always attending the Minister and me, admiring our Habit, Behaviour ; and, in a Word, all that we did or said was wonderful in their Esteem : But above all, Writing was the most astonishing to them ; they cannot conceive how it is possible for any Mortal to express the Conceptions of his Mind in such black Characters upon white Paper. After they had with Admiration argued upon this Subject, I told them, that within the Compass of two Years or less, if they pleased, they might easily be taught to read and write, but they were not of Opinion that either of them could be obtained, at least by them, in an Age.

The Officer in his Embassy in *July* last, travelled so far as to land on the Continent next to *Sky*, and it was a long Journey for a Native of *St. Kilda* so to do, for scarce any of the Inhabitants ever had the Opportunity of travelling so great a Way into the World.

They observed many wonderful Things in the Course of their Travels ; but they have a Notion that *Mack-Leod's* Family is equivalent to that of an Imperial Court, and believe the King only to be Superior to him : They say his Lady wore such a strange *Lowland* Dress,
that

that it was impossible for them to describe it they admired Glass Windows hugely, and a Looking-Glass to them was a Prodigy; they were amazed when they saw Cloth Hangings put upon a thick Wall of Stone and Lime, and condemned it as a Thing very vain and superfluous.

They reckon the Year, Quarter, and Month, as generally is done all *Britain* over. They compute the several Periods of Time by the Lives of the Proprietors and Stewards, of whose greatest Actions they have a Tradition, of which they discourse with as great Satisfaction as any Historian reflecting on the *Cæsars*, or greatest Generals in the World.

They account Riding one of the greatest Pieces of Grandeur here upon Earth, and told me with a strange Admiration, that *Mack-Leod* did not travel on Foot, as they supposed all other Men did, and that they had seen several Horses kept on purpose by him for riding.

One of their Number landing in the Isle of *Harries*, enquired who was the Proprietor of those Lands? They told him, that it was *Mack-Leod*, which did not a little raise his Opinion of him. This Man afterwards, when he was in the Isle of *Sky*, and had travelled some Miles there, one Day standing upon an Eminence, and looking round about him, he fancied he saw a great Part of the World, and then enquired to whom those Lands did belong, and when one of the Company had ac-

quainted him, that *Mack-Leod* was Master of those Lands also, the *St. Kilda* Man lifting up his Eyes and Hands to Heaven, cried out with Admiration, *O Mighty Prince, who art Master of such vast Territories!* This he expressed so emphatically in the *Irish* Language, that the Saying from that Time became a Proverb whenever any body would express a Greatness and Plenitude of Power.

One of the Things they wondered most at, was the Growth of Trees; they thought the Beauty of the Leaves and Branches admirable, and how they grew to such a Height above Plants, was far above their Conception: One of them marvelling at it, told me, That the Trees pulled him back as he travelled through the Woods: They resolved once to carry some few of them on their Backs to their Boats, and so to take them to *St. Kilda*, but upon second Thoughts, the Length of the Journey, being through the greatest Part of the Isle of *Sky*, deterred them from this Undertaking; for though they excell others in Strength, yet they are very bad Travellers on Foot, they being but little used to it.

One of their Number having travelled in the Isle of *Sky*, to the *South* Part of it, thought this a prodigious Journey; and seeing in the opposite Continent the Shire of *Inverness*, divided from *Sky* only by a narrow Sea, enquired of the Company, if that was the Border of *England*.

One of the *St. Kilda* Men, after he had taken a pretty large Dose of *Aqua-Vitæ*, and was become very heavy with it, as he was falling into a Sleep, and fancying it was to have been his last, expressed to his Companions the great Satisfaction he had in meeting with such an easy Passage out of this World; *For*, said he, *it is attended with no Kind of Pain*. In short, their Opinion of foreign Objects is as remote from the ordinary Sentiments of the rest of Mankind, as they are themselves from all foreign Converse.

I must not omit acquainting the Reader, that the Account given of the Seamen's Rudeness to the Inhabitants, has created great Prejudices in them against Seamen in general; and though I endeavoured to bring them into some good Opinion of them, it will not be, I hope, improper here to deliver the Terms upon which the Inhabitants are resolved to receive Strangers, and no otherwise: They will not admit of any Number, exceeding ten, and those too must be unarmed, for else the Inhabitants will oppose them with all their Might; but if any Number of them, not exceeding that abovesaid, come peaceably, and with good Designs, they may expect Water and Fire *gratis*, and what else the Place affords, at the easiest Rates in the World.

The Inhabitants of *St. Kilda* are much happier than the Generality of Mankind, as being almost the only People in the World who feel the Sweetness of true Liberty: What

the Condition of the People in the golden Age is feigned by the Poets to be, that theirs really is; I mean, in Innocency and Simplicity, Purity, mutual Love, and cordial Friendship, free from solicitous Cares, and anxious Covetousness; from Envy, Deceit, and Diffimulation; from Ambition and Pride, and the Consequences that attend them. They are altogether ignorant of the Vices of Foreigners, and governed by the Dictates of Reason and Christianity, as it was first delivered to them by those heroick Souls, whose Zeal moved them to undergo Danger and Trouble to plant Religion here in one of the remotest Corners of the World.

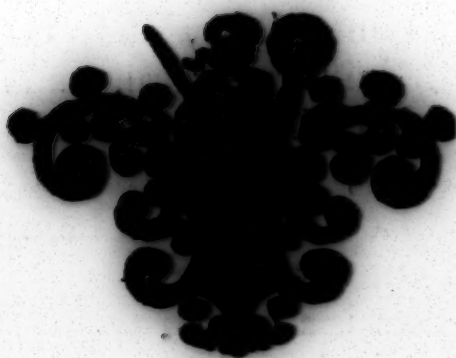
There is this only wanting to make them the happiest People in this habitable Globe, *viz.* That they themselves do not know how happy they are, and how much they are above the Avarice and Slavery of the rest of Mankind. Their Way of living makes them contemn Gold and Silver, as below the Dignity of human Nature; they live by the Munificence of Heaven, and have no Designs upon one another, but such as are purely suggested by Justice and Benevolence.

There being about thirty of the Inhabitants one Day together in the *Ile Sea*, they espied a Man with a grey Coat and Plad, in a Shirt, floating on the Sea upon his Belly, and saw likewise a *Mall* pecking at his Neck: This Vision continued above a Quarter of an Hour, and then disappeared; but shortly after, one

of

of the Spectators chanced to fall into the Sea, and being drowned, resembled the forewarning Vision in all Things, and the *Mall* was also seen upon his Neck. This was told me by the Steward some Years before, and afterwards was confirmed to me by such as were themselves Eye-witnesses of it.

None of the Inhabitants pretended to the *second Sight*, except *Roderick* the Imposter, and one Woman, and she told her Neighbours that she saw, some Weeks before our coming, a Boat (different from that of the Steward) with some Strangers in it, drawing near to their Isle.



An Account of one Roderick, supposed to have had Conversation with a familiar Spirit, and pretending to be sent by St. John the Baptist with new Revelations and Discoveries.

AFTER our landing, the Minister and I (according to our first Resolution) examined the Inhabitants apart by themselves concerning the new pretended Religion delivered to them by their false Prophet.

All of them, Young as well as Old, both Men and Women, unanimously agreed in this following Account; They did heartily Congratulate the Minister's Arrival, and at the same Time declared their Abhorrence of the Impostor's Delusions, and with repeated Instances begg'd for the Lord's sake that he might be for ever removed out of the Isle.

This Impostor is a comely well-proportioned Fellow, Red-haired, and exceeding all the Inhabitants of St. *Kilda* in Strength, Climbing, &c. He is illiterate, and under the same Circumstances with his Companions, for he had not so much as the Advantage of ever seeing any of the *Western Isles*; all his Converse being
only

only with the Steward's Retinue, who were as ignorant of Letters as himself.

In the eighteenth Year of his Age, he took the Liberty of going to fish on a *Sunday*, (a Practice altogether unknown in *St. Kilda*); and he asserts, That in his return homeward, a Man in *Lowland Dress*, *i. e.* a Cloak and Hat, appeared to him upon the Road: At this unexpected Meeting, *Roderick* falls flat on the Ground in great Disorder; upon which this Man desired him not to be surprized at his Presence, for he was *John the Baptist* immediately come from Heaven with good Tidings to the Inhabitants of that Place, who had been for a long time kept in Ignorance and Error; that he had Commission to instruct *Roderick* in the Laws of Heaven for the Edification of his Neighbours: *Roderick* answered, That he was no Way qualified for so great a Charge; the pretended *John Baptist* desired him to be of good Courage, for he would instantly make him capable for his Mission, and then delivered to him the following Scheme, in which he so mixed the laudable Customs of the Church with his own diabolical Inventions, that it became impossible for so ignorant a People as they, to distinguish the one from the other.

The first and principal Command which he imposed upon them, was that of the *Friday's Fast*, which he enjoined to be observed with such Strictness, as not to allow one of them to taste any kind of Food before Night, no, not so much as a snuff of Tobacco, which they love dearly. This bare Fast, without any Religious

ligious Exercise attending it, was the first Badge and Cognizance of his Followers. He persuaded the People, that some of their deceased Neighbours were nominated Saints in Heaven, and Advocates for them here who surviv'd; and that every one had his respective Advocate; the Anniversary of every Saint was to be commemorated by every Person under whose Tutelage they were reputed to be. And this was observed by treating the Neighbours with a liberal Entertainment of Beef or Mutton, Fowls, &c. the Impostor himself being always the chief Guest at the Feast; where a Share of the Entertainment was punctually sent to his Wife and Children; the Number of Sheep ordinarily consumed on these Occasions, was proportionable to the Ability of him that bestowed them.

He imposed likewise several Penances which they were obliged to submit to, under the Pain of being expelled from the Society of his Fraternity in Worship, which he pretended to be founded upon no less Authority than that of *St. John the Baptist's*, and threatened to inflict the saddest Judgments upon those as should prove refractory, and not obey his Injunctions.

The ordinary Penances he laid upon them, were to make them stand in cold Water (without regard to the Season, whether Frost or otherwise) during his Pleasure; and if there were any more of them upon whom this Severity was to be inflicted, they were to pour cold Water upon one another's Heads until they had satisfied his tyrannical Humour. This Diabolical Severity was Evidence enough, that he
was

was sent by him who is the *Father of Lies*, and was a *Murderer from the Beginning*.

He commanded that every Family should slay a Sheep upon the Threshold of their Doors, but a Knife must not so much as touch it, he would have them only make use of their crooked Spades for their Instruments to kill them with; for which, if duly considered, there is nothing more improper, the Edge, with which he commanded the Sheep's Neck to be cut being almost half an Inch thick. Now this was to be done in the Evening, and if either Young or Old had tasted a bit of the Meat of it that Night, the equivalent Number of Sheep were to be slain the following Day, after the former Manner.

He forbid the Use of the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and ten Commandments; and instead of them prescribed Diabolical Forms of his own. His Prayers and Rhapsodical Forms were often blended with the Names of God, our Blessed Saviour, and the immaculate Virgin; he used the *Irish* Word *Pherficbin*, i. e. Verses, which is not known in *St. Kilda*, nor in the *North-West Isles*, except to such as can read the *Irish* Tongue. But that which seems to be most surprizing, in his obscure Prayers, was his mentioning *ELI*, with the Character of our Preserver. He used several unintelligible Words in his Prayers; of which he could not tell the meaning himself; saying only, that he had received them implicitly from *St. John Baptist*, and delivered them before his Hearers without any Explication.

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He taught the Women a devout Hymn, which he called the *Virgin Mary's*, as sent from her. This Hymn was never delivered in publick, but always in a private House, or some remote Place where no Eye could see them but that of Heaven: He persuaded the Innocent Women that it was of such Merit and Efficacy, that any one who was able to repeat it by Heart, would not die in Child-bearing: And every Woman paid a Sheep to the Impostor for teaching her this Hymn.

The Place and Manner of teaching this Hymn afforded him a fair Opportunity of debauching the simple Women; and this some of their Number acknowledged to the Minister and me upon Examination.

He prescribed to all his Auditory, long Rhymes, which he called Psalms; these he ordinarily sung at his Rhapsodical Preachments.

He endeavoured to alter the common Way of burying, which was by placing the Faces of the Dead to the *East*, and would have persuaded them to place them to the *South*, and that he might prevail the more with them so to do, he placed the Bodies of those of his own Family who happened to die, facing the *South*; yet the Inhabitants would not follow his Example in this, but continued in their former Practice.

He persuaded the Women, that if in all Things they complied with his new Revelation, they should be undoubtedly carried to Heaven; and that in their Journey thither they were to pass through the Firmament riding up-
on

on white Horses. These and many more ridiculous Things he imposed upon the People, of which this is but an Abstract.

This unhappy Fellow to consecrate his Enterprize, pitched upon a little rising Spot of Ground, which he called *John the Baptist's Bush*; upon which he said these Oracles were delivered by *John Baptist* to him. And this Bush was from that Time forward believed to be Holy Ground, and must not be any further trod upon by any of their Cattle and if by Chance one of them happen to touch it, it must be forthwith slain and eaten by *Roderick* and the Owners; and if any proved refractory, and were resolved to spare their Cattle, a most dreadful Commination was issued out against them, of being thenceforward excluded from any further Fellowship with him, until they should acknowledge their Faults, and comply with his luxurious Desires, which to disobey he made them believe was damnable. It was reckoned meritorious for any body to reveal those who had transgressed the Orders given by him.

This Impostor continued for the Space of several Years, without controul, to delude these poor innocent well-meaning People, until at last his villanous Design upon the Women was found out, I mean, That he intended to accomplish under the Mask of the devout Hymn that he taught them, and was first discovered by the Officer's Wife, who by the Impostor was first proselited to his false Doctrines, and after that he would have debauched her from her conjugal Fidelity. This Woman was so heroically

cally virtuous, as to communicate his lewd Design to her Husband, who ordered the Matter so as to be in another Room hard by at the same Time he supposed *Roderick* would be coming; there he stays until this Letcher began to caress his Wife, and then he thought himself obliged seasonably to appear for her rescue, and boldly reprov'd the Impostor for his wicked Practices, which were so widely contrary to his Profession, and that upon the whole it appeared he had no true Mission.

The Impostor was very much surprized at this unexpected and fatal Disappointment, which put him into an extream Disorder, inso-much that he asked the Officer's Pardon, acknowledging his Crime, and promising never to attempt the like again. The Officer continued to upbraid him, telling him to his Face, that he was set on by the Devil; that Innocence and Chastity were always the Effects of true Religion, and the contrary Practices were countenanced by false Prophets; and that now they needed no other Proof of his being a notorious Deceiver: However the Impostor being had in great Reputation, prevailed with the Officer to patch up a Friendship with him, who for the Continuance of it, condescended to be the Impostor's *Gossip*, i. e. Sponsor at the Baptism of one of his Children; of which Ceremony there is an Account already given: When there is no Opportunity of being Sponsor to one another, and it is necessary to enter into Bonds of Friendship at Baptism, the Inhabitants of the *Western*

ern Isles, supplied this Ceremony by tasting a drop of each other's Blood.

Notwithstanding this Friendship thus patch'd up between these two, the Impostor's Mis-carriages got Air, which administred Occasion to the most thinking among them, to doubt very much of his Mission; his Father, who was reputed a very honest Man, told him frequently, that he was a Deceiver, and would come to a fatal End. This Impostor prophesied that one of the Inhabitants (whose Name I have forgotten) was to be killed in a Battel which was to be fought in the Isle of *Harries*, within a limited space of Time; this poor un-thinking Man relying so much on one whom he thought an infallible Oracle, ventured more desperately on the Rock than ever before, fancying he could not fall, but it happened that he tumbled over and was drowned, at which the Inhabitants were surprized; however the Impostor continued in the Exercise of his pretended Mission.

One of the Inhabitants called *Muldonich*, alias *Lewis*, Cousin-German to the Impostor, had an Ewe which brought forth three Lambs at once, they were seen to feed upon the Bush pretended to be sacred, but *Lewis* would not comply with the Order for killing the Sheep, and had the Boldness to aver, that it was an unreasonable Piece of Worship to destroy so many Cattle, and deprive the Owners of their Use; adding withal, that he never heard any such Thing practised in any of the *Western* Isles upon a religious Account. The Impostor in-

fisted

fisted upon the heavenly Command, which was to be observed by all his Followers, adding the dreadful Threatning against such as proved disobedient thereto ; but *Lewis* would by no means be prevailed upon, chusing rather to be excluded from the pretended Worship, than to kill his Sheep.

The simple People looked for no less than a speedy Judgment to befall this Recusant ; but when nothing ensued upon his Disobedience, all of them began to have a less Veneration for the Impostor than before ; nay, some said privately, that they might as well have ventured to run the same risque with *Lewis*, for the Preservation of their Cattle.

Notwithstanding all this Villany, the Impostor continued to maintain his Authority, until one Night (for it was always at Night that he kept his pretended religious Meetings) by a special Providence, a Boy of the Isle of *Harries*, called *John* (who had staid with his Father a Year in *St. Kilda*, and was employed in mending of their Boat) happened to go into the House where *Roderick* was preaching after his usual Manner ; the Boy lurked in the Dark, and gave his Father an Account of what he had heard, so far as he could remember ; all which the Boy's Father communicated to the Steward upon his Arrival, who being highly concerned at the Relation given him, carried *Roderick* along with him to the Isle of *Sky* before the late *Mack-Leod*, who being informed of this Fellow's Impostures, did forbid him from that
Time

Time forward to preach any more on Pain of Death.

This was a great Mortification, as well as Disappointment to the Impostor, who was possessed with a Fancy, that *Mack-Leod* would hear him preach, and expected no less than to persuade him to become one of his Proselytes, as he has since confessed.

The Impostor asserts, that every Night after he had assembled the People, he heard a Voice without, saying, *Come you out* ; which when he heard, he had no Power to stay within; and that after his going forth, *John Baptist* did meet him, and instructed him what he should say to the People at that particular Meeting. He says, that *John the Baptist* used only to repeat the Discourse to him once, of all which the Impostor owns he could scarcely remember one Sentence, and therefore he enquired of *John the Baptist* how he should behave himself in this Case; and that *John the Baptist* returned this Answer, *Go you have it* ; which the Impostor believing, was upon his return able to deliver fluently all that he had heard, and would continue (after this his Way of Preaching) for several Hours together, until he had lull'd most of his Hearers asleep.

When the above-mentioned Earthquake was over, one of the Inhabitants enquired of the Impostor with Admiration, How the Rock was made to tremble? He answered, that it was the Effect of pleasant Musick, played by a devout Saint in a Church under Ground.

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His Neighbour owned his Love for Musick, but heartily wished never to hear any more of this Kind, which carried so great a Terror along with it.

The Impostor owned the Truth of all this Account, first to the Minister and me, and then he did the same publicly after Divine Service, in the Presence of all the Inhabitants, and such as were come to that Place from the Isle of *Harries*. The Minister and Congregation jointly prayed for Repentance and Pardon to this poor Wretch, which when ended, we carried him and all the Inhabitants to the Bush pretended to be sacred; he himself leading the Van, was commanded to raise to the Ground a Part of that Wall which he ordered to be built round the said Bush (which otherwise would, in a short Time, have proved such a Purgatory, as might have robbed them of all their Goods) which he and the Inhabitants did in the Space of an Hour. We made them scatter the Stones up and down in the Field, lest their Posterity might see such a Monument of Folly and Ignorance. We reproved the credulous People for complying implicitly with such Follies and Delusions as were delivered to them by the Impostor; and all of them with one Voice answered, That what they did was unaccountable; but seeing one of their own Number and Stamp in all Respects, endued, as they fancied, with a powerful Faculty of preaching so fluently and frequently, and pretending to converse with *John the Baptist*

tist, they were induc'd to believe his Mission from Heaven, and therefore complied with his Commands without dispute, and the rather, because he did not change their Laws of Neighbourhood.

They do now regret their wandering, and hope that God may pardon their Error, since what they did was with a design (though a mistaken one) to serve him.

They are now overjoyed to find themselves undeceived, and the Light of the Gospel restored to them, as it was at first delivered to their Ancestors by the first Christian Monks, who had gone thither to instruct them.

This Impostor is a Poet, and also endued with that rare Faculty of enjoying the *second Sight*, which makes it the more probable that he was haunted by a familiar Spirit. It hath been observed of him, before his Imposture was discovered, that so often as he was employed by the Steward to go to, or return from *Harriës*, they were always expos'd to the greatest Dangers by violent Storms, being at one Time driven fifty Leagues *North-East*, and by special Providence were at last cast upon the little Isle *Rona*, twenty Leagues *North-East* of *Lewis*; the Steward's Wife, and all his Crew making their Reflections upon these Dangers since the Discovery of his Imposture, could never be prevailed upon to receive him again into their Boat. They often intreated Mr. *Campbell* and me not to admit him into our Boat, but we did not yeild to these Fears, for

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we received and brought him along with us,
and afterwards delivered him to the Steward's
Servants in the Isle of *Pabby* in *Harries*,
where he remains still in Custody in Order to
his Trial.



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